

ISSUE 4

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Since *IMAGINE* and its sister-magazine *STAR*REACH* are generally released around the same time and thus these editorial pages are composed at the same time, we try to avoid repeating ourselves, but sometimes it can't be helped.

We've been forced to raise our price with this issue. It became immediately obvious once we started with our color-story printing that we had underpriced the books, but since the first offerings were so weak in production values, we felt we had to make it up to you by first making sure the quality was what we wanted initially, then pricing it to what it's worth and to what it costs (which is considerably higher than black-only printing). Complicating all of this has been a long paper shortage here on the West Coast due to labor disputes in the mills. Cut off from a regular supply of paper, our printer has had to print on what he can get, which has meant a different kind of paper every issue. In any case, we believe you're getting your money's worth and hope you agree.

Subscriptions are at long last now available through an arrangement made with Jim Steranko of Supergraphics. The information is below in the small print. All of you who want to get your books immediately and just can't wait for your next trip in to a comics store or convention are advised to subscribe.

*Star*Reach* is now issuing a newsletter every two months with information on up-coming books and profiles of our contributors. It's available to anyone for a stamped self-addressed envelope; send six such envelopes and you'll get a year's supply as they're released.

This issue's contributions center around the tri-polar axis of Ontario, New York and California. Our front cover and color story is the work of New Yorker Steve Ditko, certainly one of our field's most popular artists; Paul Levitz wrote the story and coordinated its production, meanwhile juggling a college MA program, a daytime job as editorial coordinator of DC Comics and other writing assignments.

Our back cover art is a painting from Toronto artist John Allison, a contributor to the excellent *ANDROMEDA* magazine and commercial art there. Also from Canada is the first dramatic-art story from Dave Sim to grace our pages. Dave has written a couple of excellent stories for us that were drawn by another artist (the last being "Anticipation" in *IMAGINE* #2) and was a regular contributor of his humorous "Beavers" strip to *QUACK*. In this issue's "Cosmix" Dave takes us out to the edge of creativity and shows us the territory there. As usual, it's evocative.

"The Awakening of Tamaki" is the first of an irregular series of stories centering on a young Japanese woman's adventures in the samurai period. This story is a trans-Pacific collaboration between California script writer Lee Marrs and Japanese artist Masaichi Mukaide. Marrs' most recent contributions have been the "Stark's Quest" series she has written and drawn for *STAR*REACH*. Mukaide first appeared back in *STAR*REACH* #7, then most recently in the last issue of *IMAGINE*. We're very pleased that despite the distance and language barriers (and a terrific rush to beat a deadline) that this effort by Lee and Masaichi has succeeded. There will be more from these two for sure.

Michael Gilbert makes his first appearance on these pages (until recently he'd been concentrating on his "Wraith" series in *QUACK*). He picks up the alien-encounter theme of the Motter/Steady "Sacred and Profane" serial and gives it his own personal flavor.

All in all, one of our best issues, we believe.
You'll note an absence of a letters page this issue. It's simple: we didn't get enough letters to print. If this situation changes, we'll bring back the page.

Before we go, we'd like to make mention that our full-color CODY STARBUCK and PARSIFAL books are at last available. Their initial release this past summer was cut short when we saw the terrible printing quality. They've at last been reprinted and the quality is top-rate. We're very proud of these books, comparable to the best graphic story material produced anywhere. Naturally we recommend them.

Hasta la vista.

SGT MARK E. RAINEY
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Contributions are not encouraged, though eventually read; warning: no return postage and it'll be trashed.
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RETAILERS: a list of wholesalers is available. WHOLESALERS: please inquire about our rates.

THIS IS FICTION, FOLKS; ANY SIMILARITY TO REAL PERSONS, LIVING OR DEAD, IS COINCIDENTAL.

"The evil men do
LIVES AFTER them,
The good is oft IN-
TERRED with their
BONES..."



NOT
THIS TIME,
THOUGH.
NO, SIR!

A CADAVER-
QUOTING
SHAKESPEARE.
*CRAZY,
RIGHT?*



NOT
SO
CRAZY!
BELIEVE ME,
I'VE SEEN
CRAZIER.

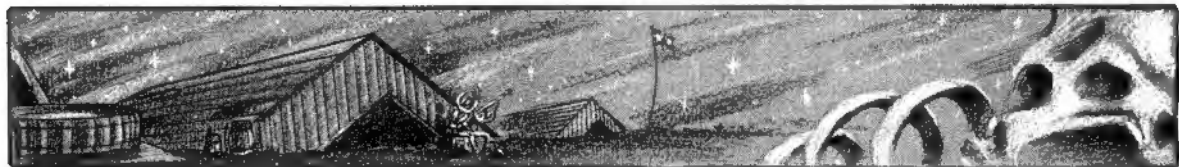
COME CLOSER. *SIT DOWN, SIT DOWN!*
OH, DON'T MIND THE GUN-IT'S TOO OLD TO
FIRE ANYHOW. GINSBERG'S THE NAME.
ABRAHAM GINSBERG. PIONEER, HUSBAND,
DREAMER...CORPSE.

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. WHAT
IS THIS CRAZY CORPSE DOING-SITTING
SOMEWHERE (IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE)
RECITING SHAKESPEARE?



THIS ABE GINSBERG MUST HAVE SOME
STRANGE STORIES TO TELL, EH? YOU DO
LIKE STORIES, DON'T YOU? O.K., LISTEN!

I'VE GOT A WONDERFUL STORY FOR
YOU-A STORY ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH. A
STORY FILLED WITH LOVE AND HATE, JOY
AND SORROW. A STORY THAT BEGAN...
TEN YEARS AGO.....





BROKEN SHIP,
BROKEN HOPES,
AND A DREAM....

A DREAM OF MILK & HONEY

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Calligraphy by Mary Gordon



WE WERE EIGHT MONTHS TOWARD THE NEW ISRAEL COLONY, WHEN THE SHIP'S CYCLIC STABILIZER PIN... DISSOLVED!

STRANGE - ISN'T IT?



A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR SHIP-CARRYING A THOUSAND OF OUR FRIENDS-ALL DESTROYED BECAUSE **SOMEONE**-IN SOME FACTORY-**SOMEWHERE**-MADE A MISTAKE. A MISTAKE ON A PIN THE SIZE OF A THIMBLE. TECHNOLOGY, FRIEND. **AH ME!** LITTLE MORE THAN TWO DOZEN OF US REACHED THE RAFT IN TIME.



THAT'S HOW WE FOUND OURSELVES TRAPPED ON SOME... **ROCK**...HALFWAY BETWEEN EARTH AND NEW ISRAEL. OH... "THE SLING AND ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE." THINGS WERE SO BAD THEY HAD TO GET BETTER, RIGHT? **MM-HMMMM**

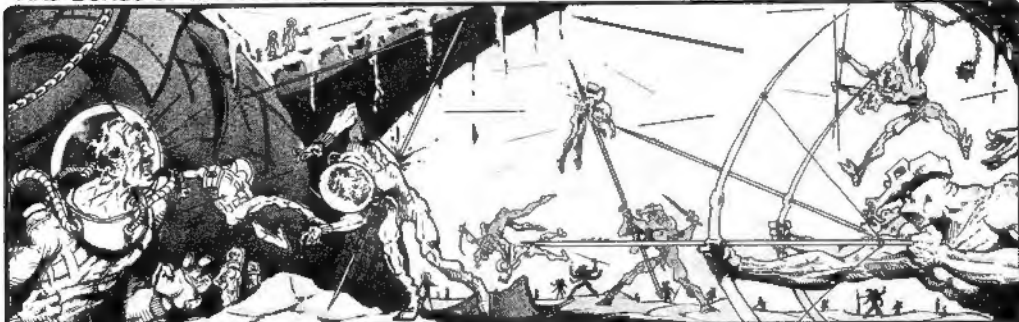
IT WAS THEN
THAT I FIRST
NOTICED THE
SHADOWS FROM
ABOVE...



...AND THEIR SOURCE!!!



NO FURTHER WARNING WAS GIVEN AS RAZOR SHARP SPIKES AND ARROWS RIPPED A PATH TO THE GROUND BELOW. THROUGH CLOTH, THROUGH GLASS, AND—WITH EQUAL EASE—THROUGH THE FLESH AND BONES OF MY FRIENDS!



IRAUL, BRIAN, LARRY, HEMBECK. SO MANY MORE! KAREN, DEBBY, FRANNY, AL, MILLER! THEIR SCREAMS SLICED THROUGH MY COMMUNICATOR. MY HEAD ACHED—BUT THEY WOULDN'T STOP! HAL, IRENE, HELENE...SCOTT...SONDA...



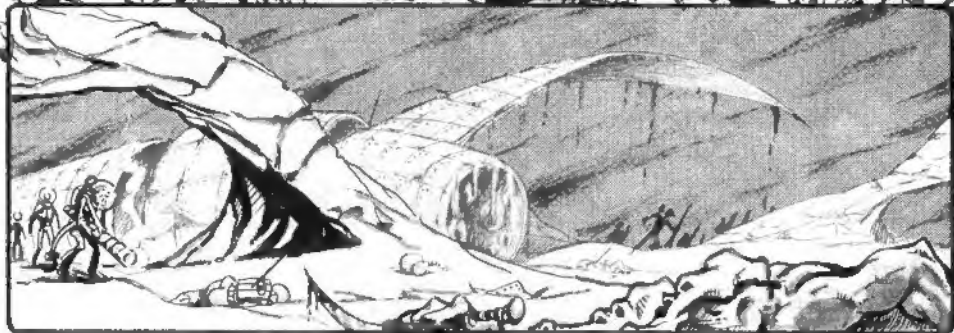
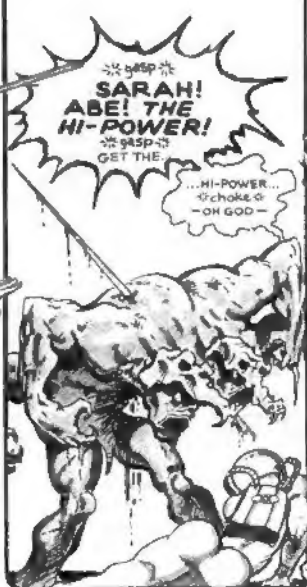
THROUGH A MIST I SAW STRANGE ROCK FORMATIONS FLOW PAST. OUR SHIP WAS MOVING—MOVING CLOSER TO ME!

I SUDDENLY REALIZED I WAS RUNNING.

AS MY MIND SLOWLY BROKE THROUGH ITS HAZE OF FEAR, I REALIZED OUR ONLY SALVATION LAY IN THE SHIP'S OFFENSIVE ARTILLERY, THOUGH EXHAUSTED AND TERRIFIED—THE SOUNDS OF A DOZEN FRANTIC, INDIVIDUAL BATTLES SPURRED ME FORWARD.

SARAH REACHED THE BROKEN HULK SECONDS BEFORE ME AND BEGAN ASSEMBLING THE MACHINERY. THEIR FEROCIOUS SURPRISE ATTACK HAD DECIMATED MOST OF US.

OUR HAND WEAPONS—DESIGNED FOR DEFENSE—HAD POWER...BUT NO RANGE. ONCE SARAH AND I GOT THE BIG GUNS SET UP THOUGH...



CRUSHED, THE REMAINING NATIVES FLED. THE ENTIRE EPISODE—START TO FINISH—HAD TAKEN NO MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES! SEVEN OF US REMAINED.

WE GATHERED THEN, IN THE FADING STARLIGHT. WORDS WERE INADEQUATE. ONE COULD ONLY WONDER WHAT DARK EMOTIONS LAY HIDDEN IN THE SILENCE. THERE WAS LITTLE TIME TO MOURN. SURROUNDED BY THE FEW SURVIVORS, I QUICKLY SAID "KADDISH" OVER THE DEAD.



AFTERWARDS, AS WE BEGAN SALVAGING WHAT WE COULD FROM THE SHIP, THE FULL HORROR OF OUR SITUATION SLOWLY FILTERED IN. AND YET STRANGELY, MIXED WITH MY PAIN, WAS AN UNDERCURRENT OF EXCITEMENT. WE WERE ABOUT TO BEGIN THE GREATEST OF CHALLENGES: SURVIVAL. AND AMONG THIS STRANGE ALIEN STAGE, I—ABE GINSBERG—HAD BEEN ELECTED TO PLAY THE "NEW MOSES"—LEADING MY PEOPLE INTO THE UNKNOWN.



MY BRIEF EUPHORIA QUICKLY FADED. STRAINING UNDER THE WEIGHT OF SUPPLIES, WE FEARFULLY BEGAN OUR JOURNEY INTO THE ALIEN DESERT. IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, THE DULL, CEASELESS MONOTONY OF OUR TRIP BLUNTED THE TERROR, CONVERTING IT INTO A HEALTHY WARINESS.



TWO WEEKS LATER, WE REACHED A SUITABLE ENCAMPMENT. WORK BEGAN IMMEDIATELY. THOUGH FAR FROM PERFECT, OUR SITE HAD A PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF ALIEN "WOOD" NEARBY AND A FLAT TERRAIN—IDEAL FOR BOTH FARMING AND DEFENSE. THE "WOOD"—SHAPED BY OUR TOOLS—PROVED IDEAL IN CONSTRUCTING SHELTER.



BECKY, LONELY SINCE THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND, MOVED IN WITH CARLOS AND JUANNA TO BECOME A FAMILY. PERHAPS MY ZAYDA (FATHER) WOULDN'T HAVE APPROVED, BUT TIMES... AND CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE. WITH THE SUBSEQUENT ASSEMBLING OF AIR PURIFIERS AND OUR FORCE FIELD, WE WERE ABLE TO RELAX OUR GUARD FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS. AND AFTER WEEKS OF CONSTANT USE—YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW GOOD IT FELT TO REMOVE THOSE BULKY OXYGEN SUITS, TENSIONS LESSENED, AND FINALLY—AFTER TOO LONG AN ABSENCE—THE BEAUTIFUL SOUND OF LAUGHTER COULD BE HEARD ONCE AGAIN. WE ALL FELT BETTER—SHELTERED, PROTECTED...

...AND
SAFE AT
LAST.

"BUT SINCE THE AFFAIRS OF MEN REST STILL UNCERTAIN, LET'S REASON WITH THE WORST THAT MAY BEFALL." Julius Caesar

HOW COULD WE HAVE ANTICIPATED WHAT NEXT OCCURRED? SHORT WEEKS AFTER OUR JOYOUS "PESACH" CELEBRATION, CARLOS AND JUANNA-UP EARLY-WERE ALREADY AT WORK IN THE GARDEN. THE REMAINING FIVE OF US WERE IN THE CABIN, EATING BREAKFAST.



CARLOS WENT INSIDE THE CABIN TO GET SOME NEW CHLORO-PODS. A VERY STRANGE THING HAPPENED THEN...



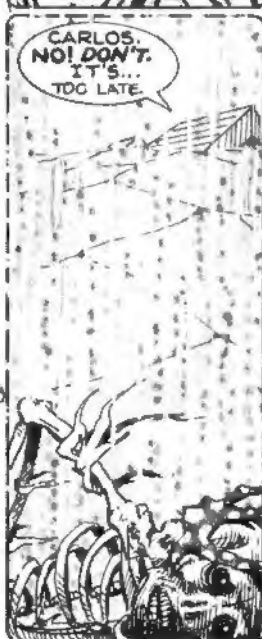
ABE? BUENOS DIAS AMIGO!



QUÉ PASA, ABE? ABE?



GASP JUANNA!



THE VICIOUSNESS OF JUANNA'S DEATH SHOCKED US ALL. WE LOVED HER. CARLOS ENTERED A DEEP DEPRESSION—A DEPRESSION THAT SWALLOWED WHOLE THE CARLOS OF OLD. IN HIS STEAD WAS A **BROODING, SPIRITLESS WRAITH**. A MAN WHO HATED HIS "COWARDICE" IN NOT GOING FORWARD THROUGH THE ACID RAINS IN A SUICIDAL ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIS JUANNA. WHAT PREVENTED HIS SLIDE TO TOTAL **DESPAIR** WAS BECKY'S WARM **COMPASSION**. RETURNING FROM YET ANOTHER UNEVENTFUL TRIP TO THE RUINS OF THE SHIP, SHE AND I DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM. AL AND LAURIE ACCOMPANIED US. BELOW LAY THE COMPOUND.

I HATED LEAVING HIM ALONE. **OH, ABE!** IF YOU COULD SEE HIM—CRYING ALL THE TIME. **IT'S SO... SO**

NO CHOICE, BECKY. WITH THE CROPS DESTROYED, WE NEEDED FOOD FROM THE SHIP. CARLOS WAS **OBVIOUSLY** IN NO SHAPE TO MAKE THE TRIP. **BESIDES, HE'S NOT ALONE.** SARAH'S TAKING—

THE SHADOWS—AGAIN! THE DAMNABLE SHADOWS!

WE HAD ALMOST REACHED THE CAMP AFTER OUR LONG JOURNEY. OUR DEFENSES WERE RELAXED, AND THEY HAD BEEN WAITING PATIENTLY WAITING LONG MONTHS—**FOR JUST THIS MOMENT!!**

SATTER!!
NATIVES ABOVE!
MOVE!

UGH!
MY ARMY!

SECONDS LATER, MY THREE FRIENDS WERE **DEAD**. THERE WAS LITTLE I COULD DO, AND WHAT I COULD DO...

I DID!!!

SARAH!
Puff

SARAH!!
GASP

SARAH!
DAMN YOU! **SARAH!**

THE GOOD SHIELD!
Grasp

TURN ON THE SHIELD!

GOT IT!

SARAH DRAGGED ME INTO THE HOUSE. I WAS SHAKING VIOLENTLY—A...MOST IN TEARS

...THE OTHERS?

"GASP"
DEAD...DAMMIT.
"SOB"
AL.. LAURIE, SARAH,
"GASP"
I KILLED THEM
I. I.

TOP IT!

YOU DID ALL YOU COULD, ABE! YOU...

YOUR ARMY?

'S NOTHING.

AND... AND REBECCA?

WHERE IS SHE... ABE?

HE KNEW. HE...KNEW.

...SHE'S..

OUT THERE...

CARLOS—THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD—

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

HE LET THEM DIE!
THIS STINKIN' WORLD KILLED ONE.

THOSE FUCKIN' MONKEY-MEN KILLED THE OTHER.

NOW I KILL THEM

DON'T TRY AND STOP ME.

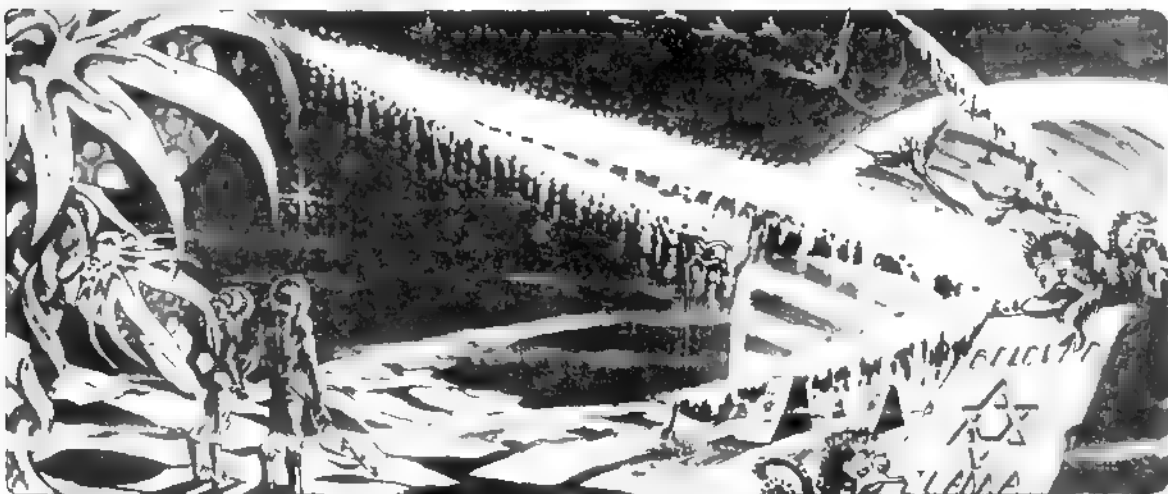
AND DON'T FOLLOW ME!

WE KNEW IT WAS SUICIDE— BUT HE WAS BEYOND REASON NOW. HIS LIFE NO LONGER HAD A PURPOSE. —HE LEFT—

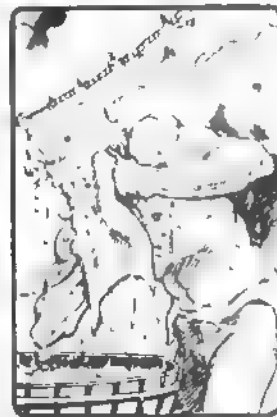
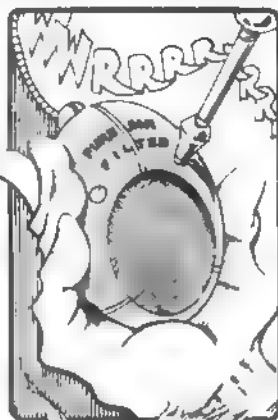
AND WE NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN!

"O THAT A MAN MIGHT KNOW THE END OF THIS DAY'S BUSINESS Ere it come. BUT IT SUFFICECH THAT THE DAY WILL END-AND THEN THE END IS KNOWN."

ONLY WE TWO REMAINED-AND THE FAINT ECHO OF OUR DREAMS. SO THIS WAS WHERE THE "NEW MOSES" HAD LED HIS PEOPLE. THE GRAVE. THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WERE VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME-FILLED WITH FEAR AND PAIN. *WITHOUT SARAH...* BUT SHE WAS THERE! SOON UNDER THE STRANGE ALIEN SUNS MY WOUNDS HEALED. SO, TOO, MY STATE OF MIND. DOUBT, SELF-PITY OR SELF-RECRIMINATION HAD NO PLACE HERE-NOW. QUESTIONS OF BLAME OR RESPONSIBILITY WERE LUXURIES THAT COULD NOT BE AFFORDED. I FORCED THEM FROM MY MIND.

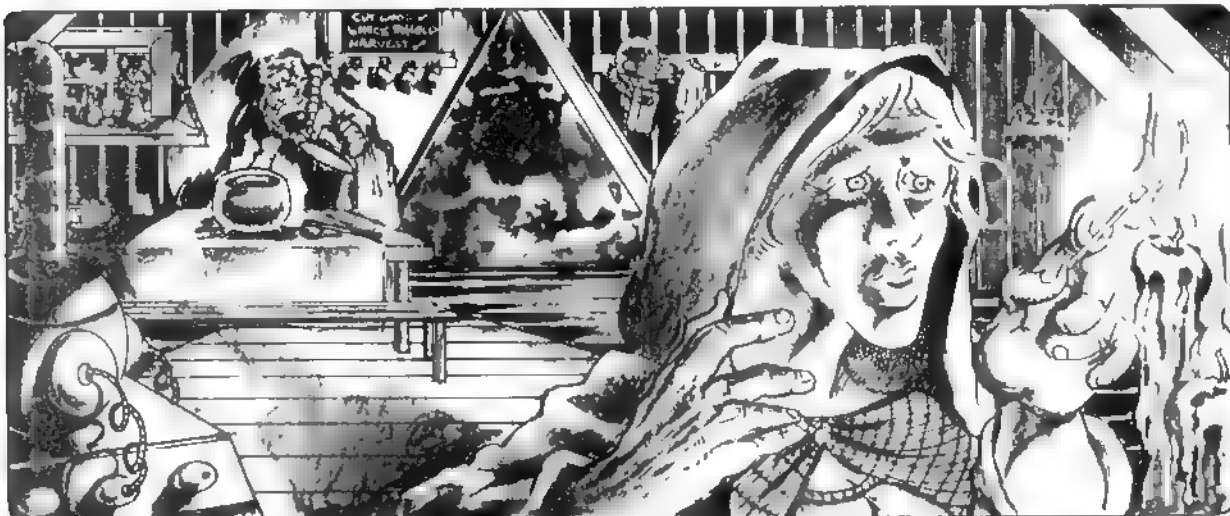


AS OFTEN HAPPENS WITH AN EVER PRESENT THREAT OF DEATH, I FE TOOK ON A GREATER, DEEPER MEANING. THE DAZZLING, UNCANNY STAR-SCAPES, THE STRANGE ALIEN SOL TEXTURES AND AROMAS-ALL WERE SAVERED...TREASURED. HITHERTO TEDIOUS CHORES BECAME-MIRACULOUSLY-*EXCITING!* AND A GREATER BOND OF LOVE AND FAITH FLOWED FREELY BETWEEN MYSELF AND SARAH THAN WE HAD EVER IMAGINED. OUR DREAM OF A NEW ISRAEL TOO, GREW STRONGER.

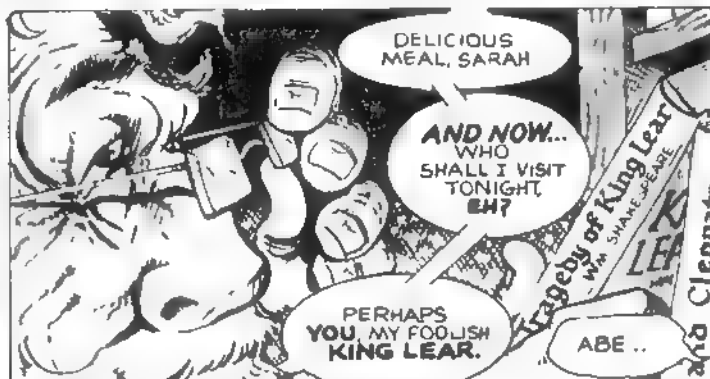


PLANTING BEGAN ANEW TO REPLACE FIELDS OF PRODUCE DESTROYED BY THE ACID. THE FORCESHIELDS HAD TO BE CHECKED AND RE-ADJUSTED TO PROTECT US FROM FUTURE "RAINS"; AIR-PURIFIERS AND WATER EXTRACTORS TUNED UP. AT DAY'S END, WHEN CALLED TO DINNER-I WAS PLEASANTLY EXHAUSTED.

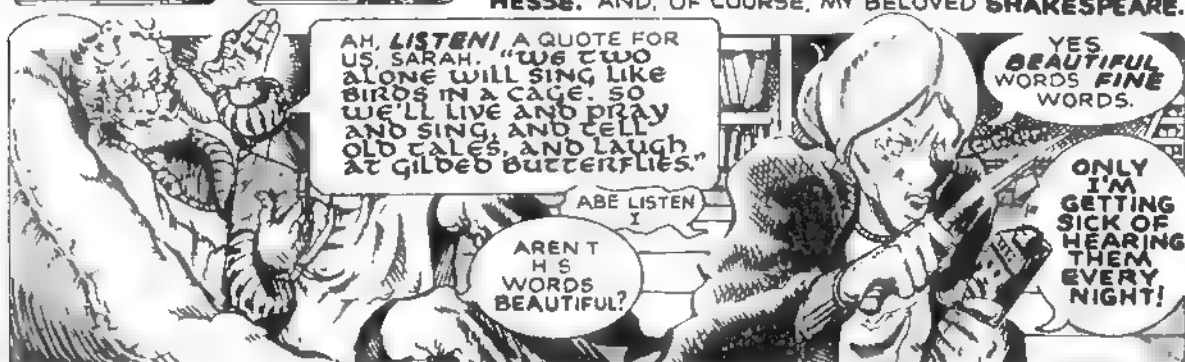
AS I ENTERED THE DARKENED CABIN, I WAS GREETED BY THE PLEASANT AROMA OF LENTIL SOUP AND BAKING BREAD. FURNITURE, SKILLFULLY CARVED BY SARAH, ADDED TO THE CABIN'S HOMEY ATMOSPHERE. MY WIFE HAD DONE A REMARKABLE JOB IN THE PREVIOUS MONTHS. IT MADE OUR ISOLATION SEEM LESS INTENSE. MY COLLECTION OF RARE OLD BOOKS, TAKEN FROM THE SHIP COMPLETED THE EFFECT. IT WAS FRIDAY NIGHT. SARAH SEEMED UNUSUALLY... TENSE(?)... AS SHE BEGAN THE SABBATH RITUAL.



UNDER THE SILENT LUMINESCENCE OF THE SABBATH CANDLES, SARAH'S FEATURES MERGED STRANGELY WITH THOSE OF ANNA, MY FIRST WIFE OF MANY YEARS. STILL IN HER EARLY FORTIES, SARAH—MY CHILD BRIDE—POSSESSED ANNA'S HAUNTING EYES. BLUE CRYSTAL EYES. UNCOMMON EYES THAT GLOWED WITH A SHARED INNER BEAUTY AND MATURITY. A GLOW THAT ANNA NOW SHARED ONLY IN MY MEMORY. A GLOW FOREVER DIMMED IN THE TERRIBLE INTENSITY OF OLD ISRAEL'S "FINAL HOLOCAUST." DIMMED ALONG WITH SIXTY MILLION OTHER BEAUTIFUL LIGHTS. ANNA... ANNA...



AFTER DINNER, WE'D RELAX—SARAH WITH HER CARVINGS, I WITH MY BOOKS. I WAS HAPPILY ADDICTED TO THE BRILLIANT STREAM OF IMAGES THAT CASCADED FROM THEIR CRUMBLING PAGES. WORLDS LONG GONE REAPPEARED—THE STRANGE, WONDROUS WORLDS OF KAFKA, CHAUCER, KESEY, HESSE. AND, OF COURSE, MY BELOVED SHAKESPEARE.



SARAH!!

WELL I AM! IF IT'S NOT SHAKESPEARE YOU'RE QUOTING, IT'S HEMINGWAY OR PLATO OR... OR SOMEONE!

... ALWAYS HIDING IN YOUR DREAMWORLD!

NU? SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH DREAMS, SARAH-GIRL?



WHAT'S WRONG?!? LOOK AROUND! AT THE REAL WORLD. ACID RAINS—GOD KNOWS WHAT ELSE! AND STILL YOU CAN ASK? TRAPPED ON THIS HELL PLANET—MAYBE FOREVER. AND THOSE DISGUSTING TWO HEADED "THINGS"! WHAT'S WRONG?



THOSE "THINGS" LIVE HERE, SARAH. LONG BEFORE US. IT'S THEIR WORLD—NOT OURS.

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR!! THOSE SLIMY MURDERING MONSTERS!! OUT THERE—WAITING, KILLING US OFF—ONE BY ONE. DO YOU CARE? OH, NO! YOU'VE GOT YOUR BOOKS!



WELL, I CARE.

EASY THERE, SARAH—YOU'RE A LITTLE TIRED RIGHT NOW...



TIRED?? YES! YES—I'M TIRED!! TIRED OF ALWAYS BEING AFRAID! TIRED OF SEEING MY FRIENDS DIE... ONE BY ONE...



1000 PEOPLE DEAD. FOR WHAT? SO WE CAN SIT ON AN ALIEN WORLD READING SHAKESPEARE? SOMETIMES I WONDER....



WHY WE LEFT EARTH...

AT ALL... "SOB" "SOB"



WHY... SARAH?



WE HAD NO CHOICE.



WE... ARE JEWS.

AS JEWS WE WERE BORN-AND AS JEWS WE WILL DIE. AND THE WORLD DOESN'T LIKE JEWS. SARAH THE WORLD KILLS JEWS. I'VE SEEN IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN. WHETHER IN SPAIN DURING THE INQUISITIONS, OR IN COMMUNIST RUSSIA OR NAZI GERMANY. IN EGYPT, IN POLAND; UNDER CZARS, PHARAOHS, OR PRESIDENTS. BEFORE CHRIST. AFTER CHRIST. IN THE 14TH CENTURY OR THE 21ST CENTURY.

...IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. THE PATTERN IS THE SAME

WHEN THEY NEED OUR SKILLS, OUR KNOWLEDGE, THEY ACCEPT US. WELCOME US. BUT IN TIMES OF TROUBLE-WHETHER IT BE CRIME, ECONOMIC DEPRESSION, OR A SIMPLE LACK OF MORAL PURPOSE-THE JEW SUDDENLY BECOMES EXPENDABLE. A SMOKE SCREEN TO BLIND A COUNTRY FROM ITS SYSTEM-FAILURES. AN EASY TARGET FOR PEOPLE'S ANGER AND FRUSTRATIONS.

JUST YOUNG AGO WE DECIDED OUR ONLY REAL HOPE FOR PEACE- FOR SAFETY- LAY IN A HOMELAND OF OUR OWN. ISRAEL WAS THAT PLACE. ONLY NOW-OUR BELOVED ISRAEL IS A CHARRED NUCLEAR CINDER. SIXTY MILLION DEAD.

AND NOW-PURGES IN AMERICA. **IN AMERICA, SARAH!** KILLING JEWS IN THE STREET- FOR NO REASON. BECAUSE WE ARE DIFFERENT-AND PEOPLE FEAR THAT WHICH IS DIFFERENT. SO JUST MATELY-AFTER CENTURIES OF TRYING TO ASSIMILATE-OR TO BE ACCEPTED SIMPLY AS PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT-AND FAILING IN THIS...

THE FINAL REALIZATION CAME. "IF A HOME OF PEACE AND SECURITY FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE CANNOT BE FOUND ON THE EARTH..."



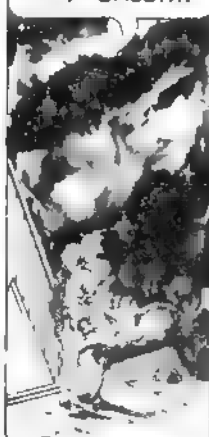
"... THEN WE MUST LEAVE THE EARTH!!"



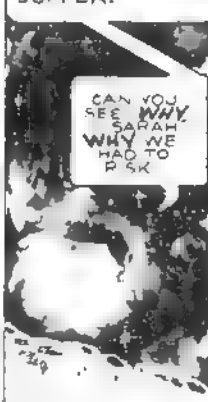
WE CAME TO SPACE TO ESCAPE PERSECUTION- TO HAVE THE FREEDOM TO BELIEVE WHATEVER WE WISH TO BUILD A GLORIOUS NEW WORLD - A NEW ISRAEL!



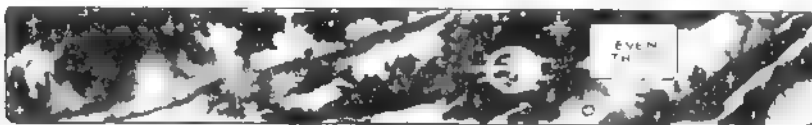
PERHAPS WE WILL DIE PERHAPS A THOUSAND OR EVEN ANOTHER SIXTY MILLION WILL DIE BEFORE OUR DREAM BECOMES A REALITY. IT DOESN'T MATTER, REALLY...



WHAT MATTERS IS THAT SOMEDAY SOMEDAY OUR CHILDREN AND THE OTHER CHILDREN - THROUGHOUT TIME - WILL BE FREED FROM THE FEAR AND HUMILIATION WE WERE FORCED TO SUFFER.



CAN YOU SEE WHY SARAH WHY WE HAD TO RISK





OH, ABE!
"SOB!"

YOU'RE A GOOD COURAGEOUS WOMAN, SARAH. BUT WE'VE BOTH BEEN THROUGH THINGS - NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO IT'S BEEN HARD - IMPOSSIBLY HARD SOMETIMES...

BUT SOMETIMES WHEN THINGS ARE BLACK - **VERY BLACK** - IT'S GOOD TO REMEMBER...

...THAT THERE IS A REASON - A PURPOSE



I LOVE YOU, ABE.

OF COURSE, SARAH. BUT THAT DOESN'T EXCUSE MY EMPTY-HEADEDNESS. I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THAT SOMETHING WAS TROUBLING YOU. I SOMETIMES TALK TOO MUCH AND LISTEN TOO LITTLE.

WELL .. MAYBE BUT JUST A LITTLE TOO LITTLE.

AND I HAD NO RIGHT TO YELL AT YOU EITHER. WE'RE EVEN?

A DEAL! EVEN!

DO YOU THINK WE WILL SOMEDAY SEE NEW ISRAEL, ABE?

PERHAPS. IN 4 OR 5 MORE MONTHS. PERHAPS.

IF THE EXODUS III RECEIVED OUR TRANSMISSIONS. IF THE JEWISH EMIGRATION QUOTA HASN'T BEEN FURTHER REDUCED. IF THEIR SHIP SURVIVES THE JOURNEY.

HUSH, HUSBAND - ENOUGH SADNESS. THE CHOICE WAS MINE. WE ARE ALIVE. WE HAVE EACH OTHER. IT IS ENOUGH.

NOW COME INSIDE - YOU'LL CATCH A CHILL.



AH, SARAH. WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN YOU INTO?



WAS THERE...
ANYTHING
ELSE YOU
WANTED TO
SAY TO ME,
SARAH?



...I...ABE...
TELL
ME THAT
YOU LOVE ME,
AVRAHAM.

I WANT
TO HEAR YOU
SAY IT.

MY DEAR, SWEET,
LOVELY SARAH,
OF COURSE
I LOVE YOU.
WITH MY EN-
TIRE SOUL I
LOVE YOU.



ABE—LISTEN. I
I'M WAY OVERDUE.

OVERDUE?
NUP? SO NOW
YOU'RE A BOOK IN
A LIBRARY, EH?



NO JOKES, ABE.
I MEAN, I THINK.

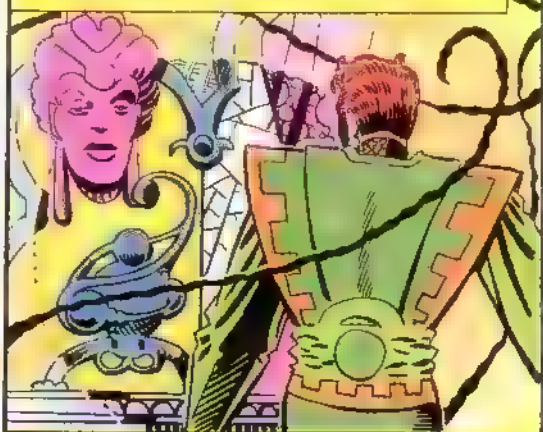
We're
having a
chic Abe

NEXT ISSUE: THE CONCLUSION
OF A DREAM OF MEAT & MONEY.

A ROOM ON THE EDGE OF NOWHERE. A ROOM THAT EXISTS OR DOESN'T.

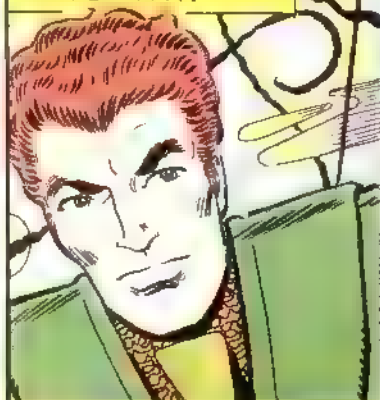


A ROOM THAT IS EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE, EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING, AND NOTHING AS WELL.



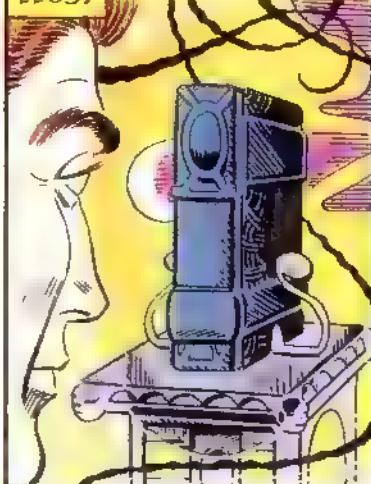
YET IF IT IS ANYTHING, EVEN FOR THE BRIEFEST OF INSTANTS, IT IS WHAT IT IS TO HIM ALONE.

HIS NAME IS NOT IMPORTANT, EVEN WHILE IT IS ALL IMPORTANT.

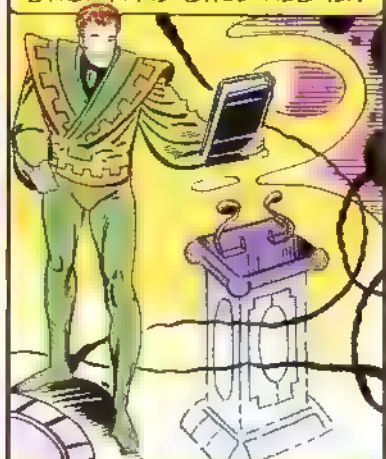


IT IS ENOUGH THAT HE WAS THE FIRST, AND WILL EVER BE THE LAST.

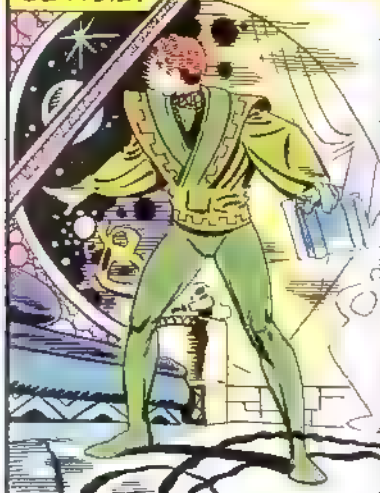
IT IS ENOUGH THAT HE IS WHAT HE IS, AND WILL NEVER BE LESS.



NOTHING THAT LIVES MAY NAME HIM, THOUGH THE LIVING CAN CALL HIS NAME ONCE, AND ONCE ALONE.



AND IT IS SAID THAT HE WILL ANSWER, THOUGH THAT MAY BE A LIE.



FOR WHATEVER THE TRUTH IS, IT EXISTS ONLY HERE, IN A ROOM ON THE EDGE OF NOWHERE.



A ROOM THAT EXISTS, OR DOESN'T.

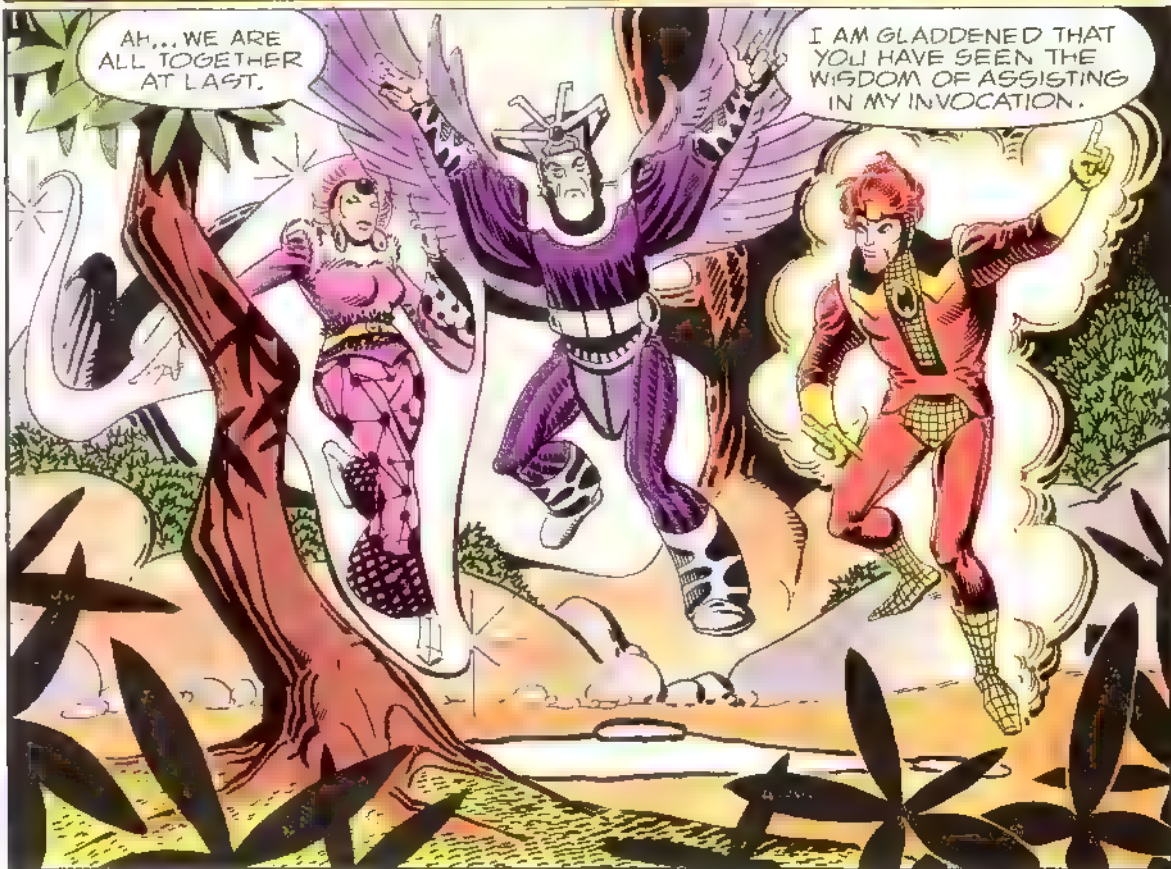


WORLDS, ON THE OTHER HAND, TEND TO BE LESS SUBTLE ABOUT THEIR EXISTENCE. TH'S ONE FOR EXAMPLE, HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN CIRCLING ITS STAR FOR A LONG, LONG TIME.

ITS PAST HAS BECOME INDISPUTABLE. TO BALANCE THAT, ITS FUTURE HAS BECOME, YEAR BY YEAR, EVER MORE QUESTIONABLE.

THE SUMMONING

PAUL LEVITZ, WRITER / STEVE DITKO, ARTIST / GAFFER, LETTERER / GAFFORD, COLORIST



AH... WE ARE ALL TOGETHER AT LAST.

I AM GLADDENED THAT YOU HAVE SEEN THE WISDOM OF ASSISTING IN MY INVOCATION.



TO HAVE DONE LESS WOULD BE TO DENY HOPES OF OUR OWN.

Hmph! SPEAK TRUTH, WOMAN.



NONE OF US HAVE THE POWER TO SHAPE THIS DESOLATE SPHERE AS WE WOULD, SO WE MUST TRY TO DRAW THAT POWER FROM EACH OTHER.

TO BE A TRUTH... YET TO BE NOT THE ONLY TRUTH.

ENOUGH, ENOUGH...



WE HAVE ALREADY SPENT ETERNITIES IN ARGUMENT.

NOW LET US ACT!

SHOON

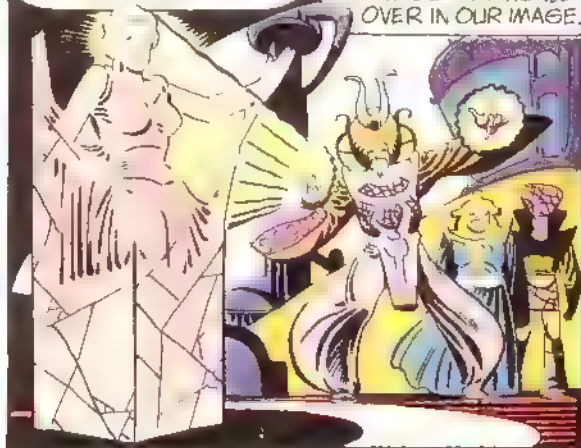
HEAR ME NOW, YE WHO WALKS
BETWEEN THE WORLDS!
LISTEN, AND I SHALL SPEAK
OF THIS WORLD, ON WHICH I
WAS BORN AND ON WHICH I
SHALL DIE!

SEE IT AS I
SEE IT, AND
DESPAIR!



MILLENNIA AGO, WHEN I
WAS YOUNG, WHEN THIS
WORLD WAS YOUNG
THEN WERE THE DAYS
OF POWER!

THEN WE LEARNED
WHAT WE THOUGHT
WERE THE SECRETS
OF THE UNIVERSE,
AND MADE THIS WORLD
OVER IN OUR IMAGE.



BUT OUR DREAMS EXCEEDED OUR
POWER, AND WE ARE LEFT WITH
THIS... THIS MOCKERY THAT IS LESS
THAN NOTHING.

COME TO US
NOW, YE WHO
WERE THE
FIRST, AND
FULFILL
YOUR
DESTINY!



COME TO US NOW,
YE WHO WILL BE
THE LAST, AND MAKE
OF THIS GLOBE A
MONUMENT TO OUR
FOOLISHNESS.

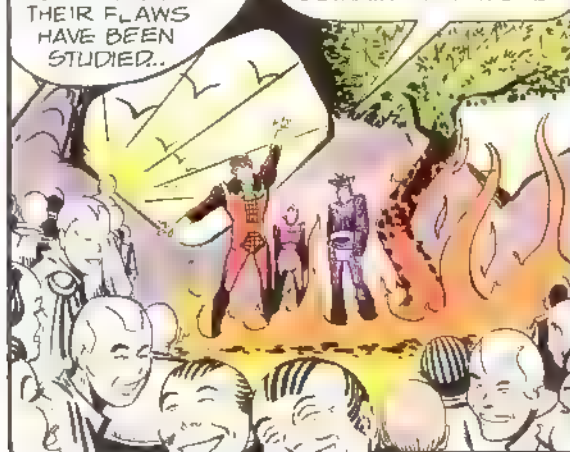
No! HEAR ME, ONE
WHO I MAY NOT
NAME, AND PAY
NO NEED TO AN
OLD AND BITTER
MAN!

THERE IS
LIFE YET IN
THIS WORLD
UNBORN!



AGES ARE PAST
SINCE THE FIRST
MASTERS OF THE
POWER ERRED.
AGES IN WHICH
THEIR FLAWS
HAVE BEEN
STUDIED..

...AND OVERCOME WHAT
FAILED ONCE WILL NOT
FAIL AGAIN, AND THIS
CAN BE A FRUITFUL
DOMAIN ONCE MORE



COME TO US NOW, YE WHO
WERE THE FIRST, AND
RESTORE MAN TO THIS
WORLD!

COME TO US
NOW, YE WHO
WILL BE THE
LAST, AND WITH
YOUR POWER GIVE
LIFE WHERE I
CANNOT!

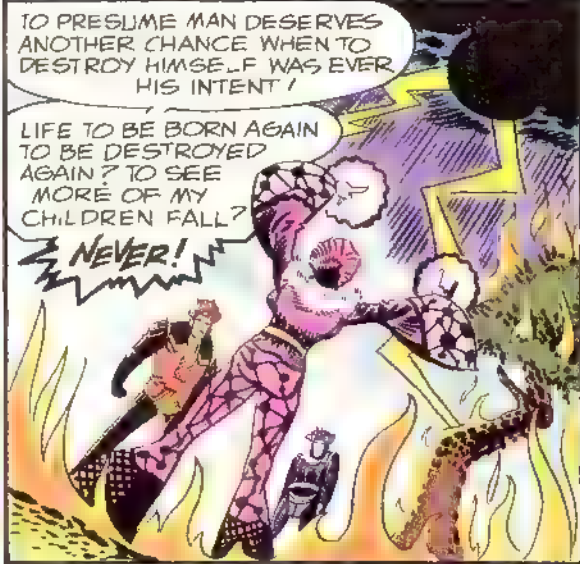




THERE. WILL YOU
NOT SUPPORT MY
AVOCATION AND
PLEAD THE CAUSE
OF LIFE?

TO SPEAK TRUTH WAS
YOUR COMMAND, AND TO
DO SO MY INTENT.

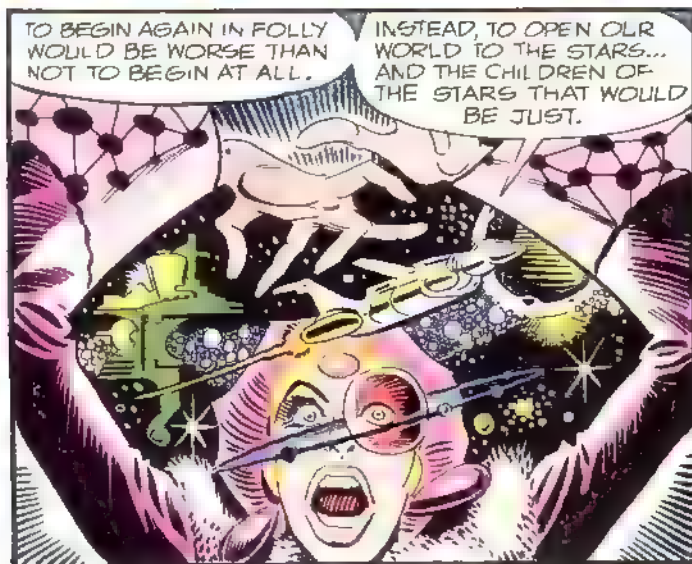
TO SUPPORT YOUR
DREAM WOULD BE
TO BETRAY
MY OWN!



TO PRESUME MAN DESERVES
ANOTHER CHANCE WHEN TO
DESTROY HIMSELF WAS EVER
HIS INTENT!

LIFE TO BE BORN AGAIN
TO BE DESTROYED
AGAIN? TO SEE
MORE OF MY
CHILDREN FALL?

NEVER!



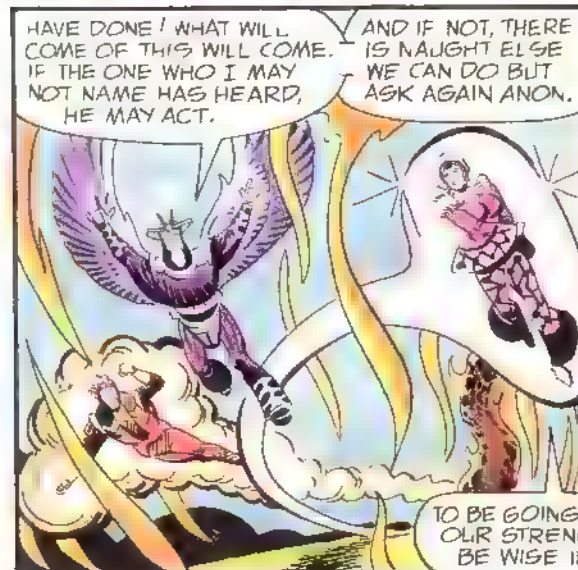
TO BEGIN AGAIN IN FOLLY
WOULD BE WORSE THAN
NOT TO BEGIN AT ALL.

INSTEAD, TO OPEN OUR
WORLD TO THE STARS...
AND THE CHILDREN OF
THE STARS THAT WOULD
BE JUST.



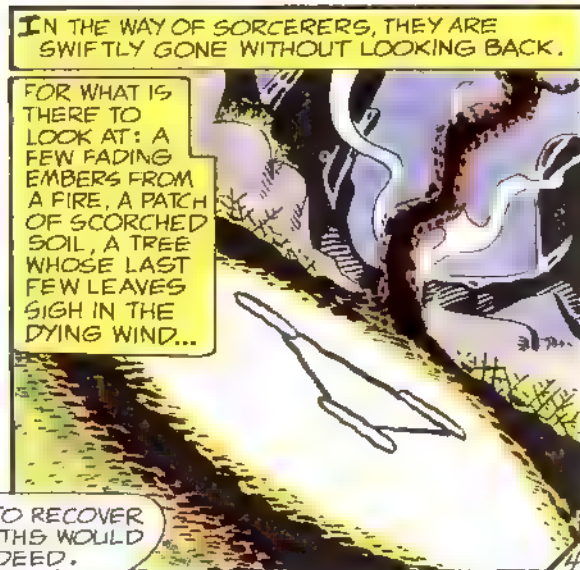
COME TO US
NOW, YE WHO
WERE THE
FIRST, AND
BRING THE
PROMISE OF
NEW LIFE
NEED.

COME TO US NOW,
YE WHO WILL BE THE
LAST, AND BE HERALD
TO THE ARRIVAL OF
THOSE WHO HAVE
LOST A WORLD AND
BENEFIT BY OURS.



HAVE DONE! WHAT WILL
COME OF THIS WILL COME.
IF THE ONE WHO I MAY
NOT NAME HAS HEARD,
HE MAY ACT.

AND IF NOT, THERE
IS NAUGHT ELSE
WE CAN DO BUT
ASK AGAIN ANON.

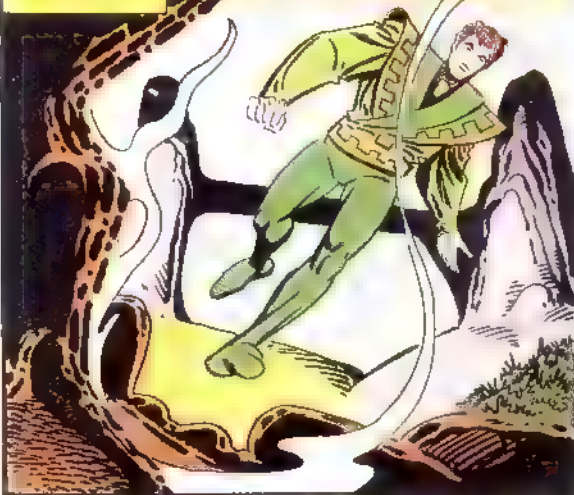


IN THE WAY OF SORCERERS, THEY ARE
SWIFTLY GONE WITHOUT LOOKING BACK.

FOR WHAT IS
THERE TO
LOOK AT: A
FEW FADING
EMBERS FROM
A FIRE, A PATCH
OF SCORCHED
SOIL, A TREE
WHOSE LAST
FEW LEAVES
SIGH IN THE
DYING WIND...

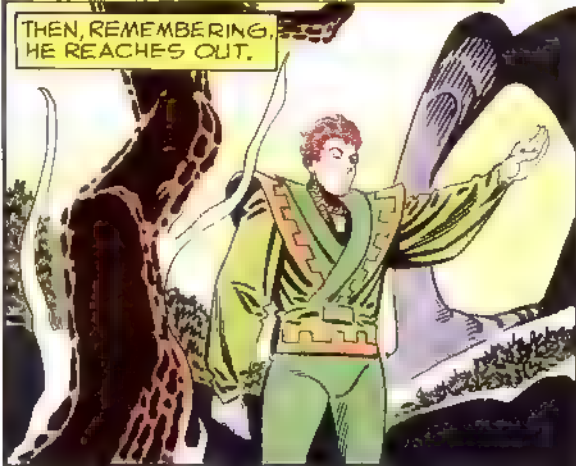
TO BE GOING TO RECOVER
OUR STRENGTHS WOULD
BE WISE INDEED.

...AND A BEING IN THE SHAPE OF MAN, WHO STANDS WHERE NO MAN STOOD A MOMENT BEFORE...



FOR A MOMENT HE GAZES ROUND, SEARCHING...PERHAPS FORGETTING HOW THE RULES OF REALITY DIFFER FROM HIS OWN.

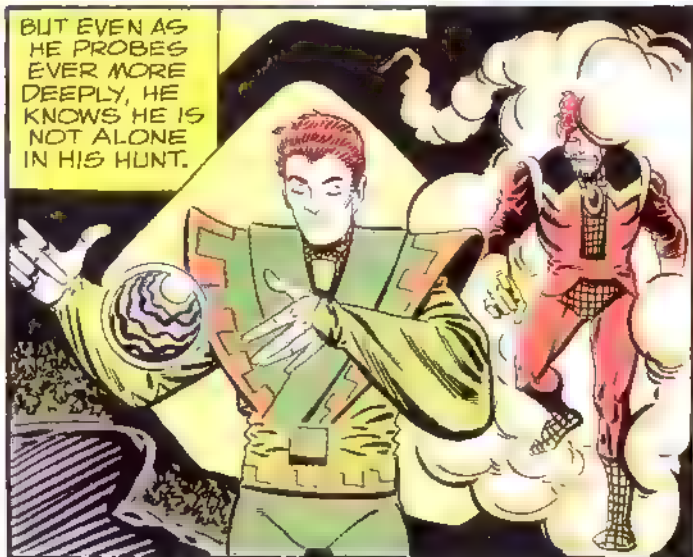
THEN, REMEMBERING, HE REACHES OUT.



REALITY TWISTS, AND SURRENDERS, AS IT MUST. AND HE GAINS THE MEANS TO SEARCH FOR WHAT HE SEEKS.



BUT EVEN AS HE PROBES EVER MORE DEEPLY, HE KNOWS HE IS NOT ALONE IN HIS HUNT.



GREETINGS, ONE WHOSE NAME I MAY NOT SPEAK! I AWAIT YOUR GIFT OF NEW LIFE. I KNEW MY INVOCATION WAS DESTINED TO SUMMON YOU.



ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE... NONE ARE NECESSARY! WE SHALL SEE WHAT GIFTS THIS GLOBE CAN BEAR.

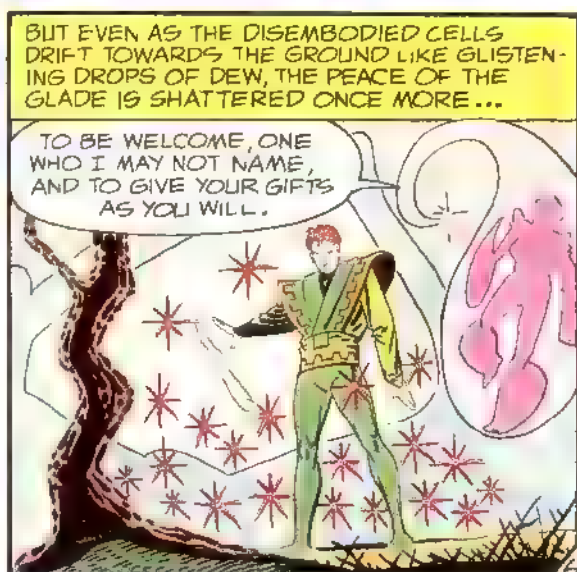
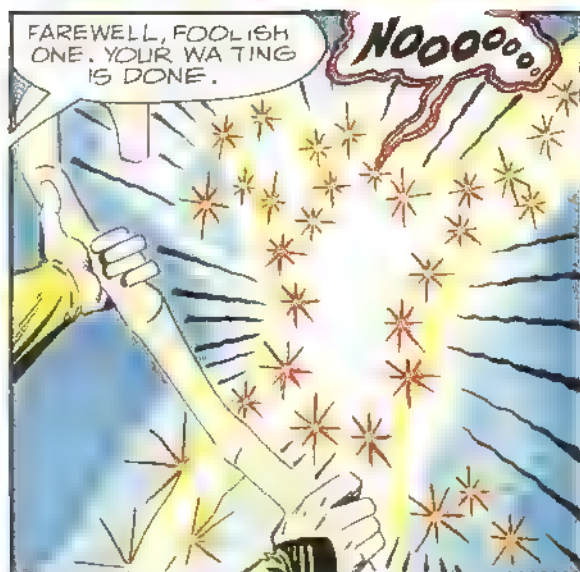


BUT YOU MUST GIVE NEW LIFE. THERE IS NO OTHER IMAGINABLE REASON FOR YOUR PRESENCE, NOTHING ELSE BEYOND OUR OWN POWER!

EVERYTHING MAY BE IMAGINED, EVEN MADE REAL. BUT THAT MAY TAKE INFINITY, SO I BID YOU WAIT...

AND YOU SHALL SEE WHAT MAY BE REVEALED.





TO HOPE THAT
YOUR WILL
WOULD BE
LIKE UNTO
MINE IS NOT
A SIN, I
TRUST!

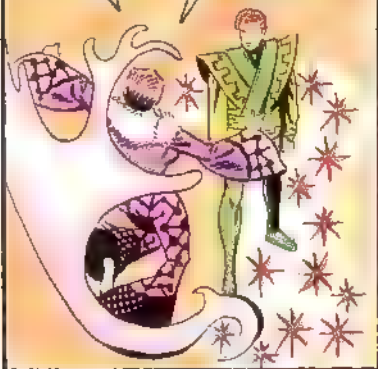
JUST AS TO
WITNESS YOUR
TIMELY
ARRIVAL IS
TO GAIN
COURAGE
AND HOPE.

HOPE IS
VITAL, BUT
YOU MUST
NOT LET
IT MIS-
LEAD.

I HAVE NOT
SAID WHOSE
SUMMONING
HAS BROUGHT
ME TO THIS
PLACE, NOR
SHALL I.

FOR ALL
THINGS
ARE
POSSIBLE
AND THAT
IS ALL THAT
MATTERS.

TO HAVE ALL LIFE
CRY OUT TO YOU,
AND TO ANSWER
NOT ? TO BE THE
STUFF OF WHICH
LEGENDS ARE
MADE, INDEED.



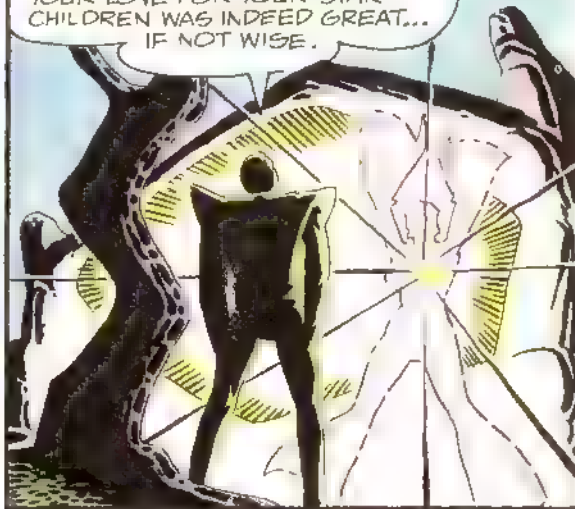
THEN TO BE
GUIDED BY LEGENDS
IS THE ONLY PATH.

TO OBEY THE WISDOM
OF ANCIENTS WHICH
SAYS YOU WILL ANSWER
THE LIVING ONLY IF
YOUR NAME IS
SPOKEN...

...AND THE
PRICE TO BE
PAID.



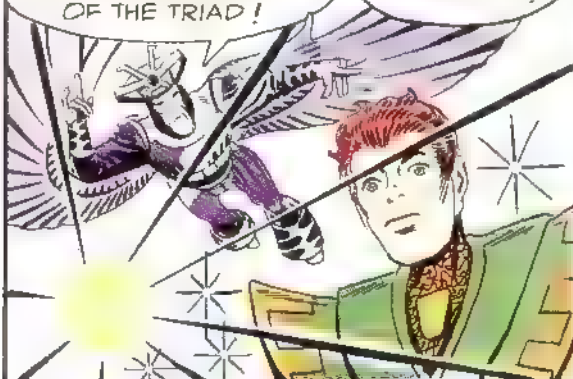
FAREWELL, COMPASSIONATE ONE.
YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR STAR-
CHILDREN WAS INDEED GREAT...
IF NOT WISE.



AS THE LIGHT DIES, THE SHADOW OF SHIMMER-
ING WINGS COMES TO REST...

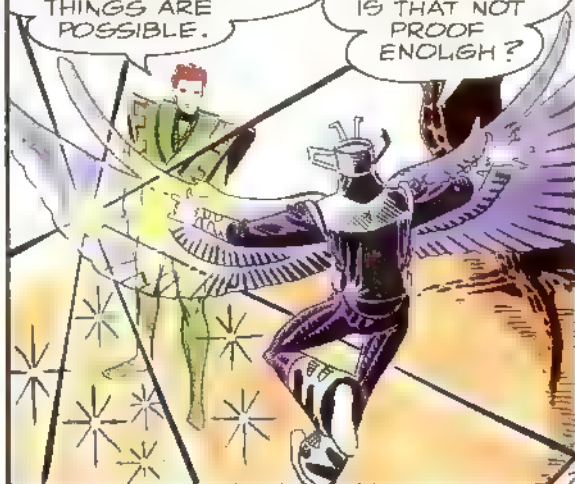
I DARED NOT HOPE--BUT
YOU'VE PROVEN IT! AFTER
ALL THESE MILLENNIA,
PROOF THAT I WAS
INDEED THE MIGHTIEST
OF THE TRIAD!

I THANK
YOU, OH ONE
WHO I MAY
NOT NAME, FOR
ANSWERING MY
SUMMONS!



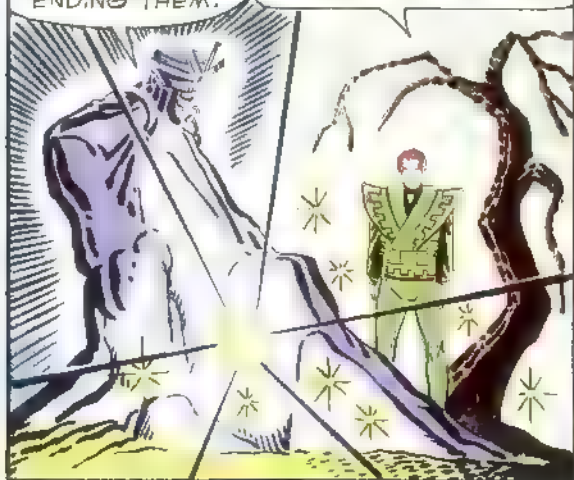
I HAVE NOT SAID I
ANSWERED YOUR CALL,
WIZARD, THOUGH ALL
THINGS ARE
POSSIBLE.

IS NOT MY DESIRE
GRANTED ME AND
LIFE ENDED ?
IS THAT NOT
PROOF
ENOUGH ?



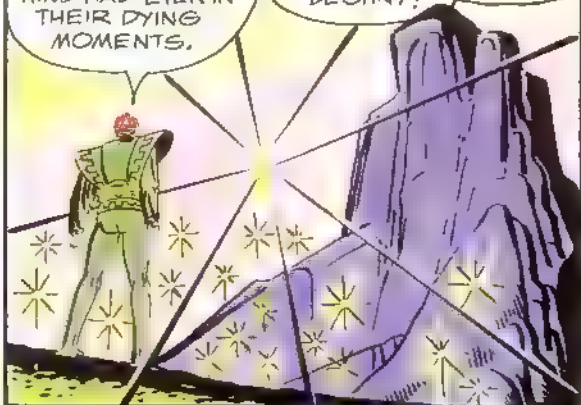
MY LABORS HAVE ENDED, AND I THANK YOU FOR ENDING THEM.

FAREWELL, CONFIDENT ONE, THOUGH I SHARE NOT YOUR CONFIDENCE.



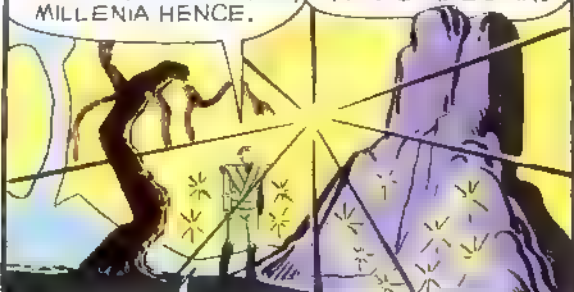
YET PERHAPS, IF I WERE TO SHARE YOUR ANCESTRY, I MIGHT. FOR WHAT EGO, WHAT PRE-SUMPTION, YOUR KIND HAD EVEN IN THEIR DYING MOMENTS.

EVEN YOU THREE--THE MIGHTIEST OF YOUR RACE--DESTROYING YOUR LIVES TO PROVE THAT YOU WERE RIGHT, THAT YOU HAD MASTERED DESTINY!



AND ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE, EVEN THAT EACH OF YOU MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT. FOR FROM THE CELLS OF ONE MAN MAY COME FORTH A NEW RACE OF MEN, MILLENIA HENCE.

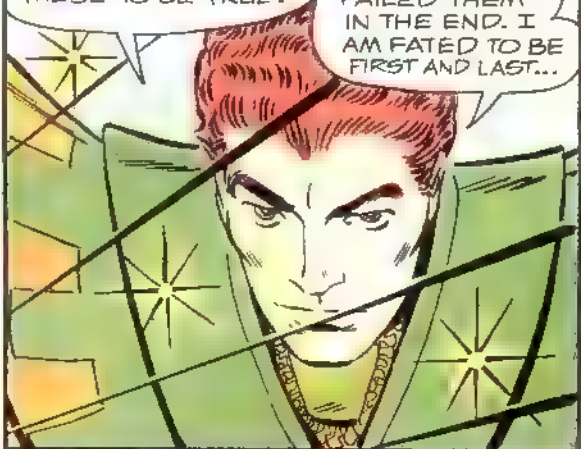
OR THE DYING LIGHT OF A SOUL MAY PROVIDE A BEACON ACROSS THE GALAXIES, GUIDING OTHERS TO THIS WORLD BEFORE MAN IS REBORN.



AND WHO KNOWS WHO WILL SEE THIS VAST MONUMENT TO FOLLY, IF ANY LIVING EYES EVER GAZE ON IT AGAIN?

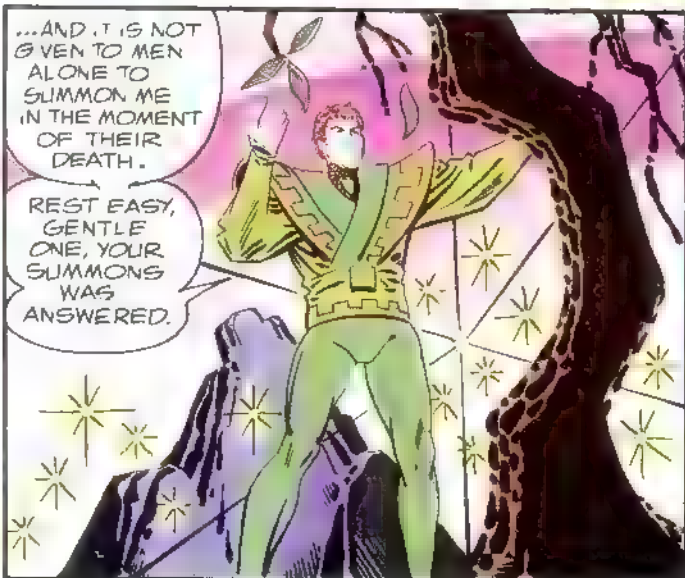
BUT THOUGH ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE NONE ARE NECESSARY... AND I DOUBT ANY OF THESE TO BE TRUE.

FOR THOUGH THESE MAGES WERE WISE, THEIR WISDOM FAILED THEM IN THE END. I AM FATED TO BE FIRST AND LAST...



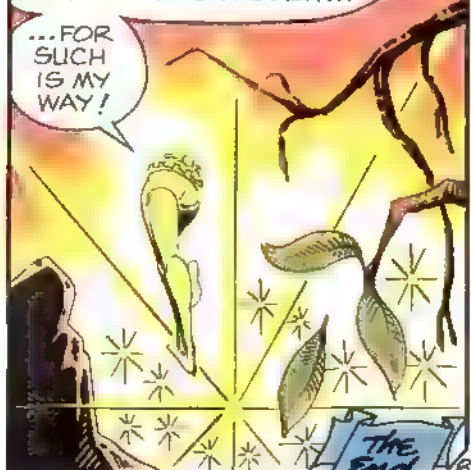
...AND IT IS NOT GIVEN TO MEN ALONE TO SUMMON ME IN THE MOMENT OF THEIR DEATH.

REST EASY, GENTLE ONE, YOUR SUMMONS WAS ANSWERED.



YOUR WORLD IS YOUR OWN ONCE MORE, AND I SHALL RETURN ONLY WHEN THE LAST LEAF IS FALLEN...

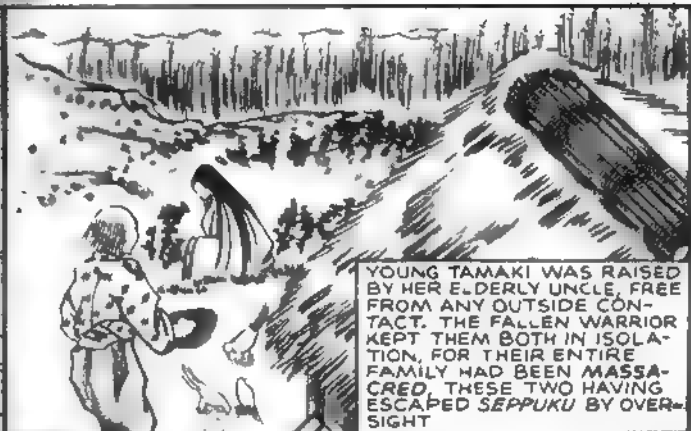
...FOR SUCH IS MY WAY!



THE END

LONG AGO, WHEN DAIMYOS, FEUDAL LORDS, RULED THE LAND OF THE GODS, A SECLUDED VALLEY SHELTERED THE GROWTH OF A YOUNG WOMAN...WHO WAS TO BECOME LEGEND BEFORE THE AGE OF TWENTY.

THE AWAKENING OF TAMAKI



YOUNG TAMAKI WAS RAISED BY HER ELDERLY UNCLE, FREE FROM ANY OUTSIDE CONTACT. THE FALLEN WARRIOR KEPT THEM BOTH IN ISOLATION, FOR THEIR ENTIRE FAMILY HAD BEEN MASSACRED, THESE TWO HAVING ESCAPED SEPPUKU BY OVERSIGHT

TRUE TO SAMURAI TRADITION, THE UNCLE TRAINED TAMAKI IN ALL THE SKILLS OF SURVIVAL, THE HONORABLE CUSTOMS, HIS LOYALTY AND AFFECTION WAS POURED INTO HER SMALL SELF. SHE WAS TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING...

PAY
ATTENTION,
YOU LITTLE
BIRD-DUNG!



STORY: LEE MARRS
ART: MASAICHI MUKAIDE
LETTERING: MARY GORDON

.. AND IN SOME WAYS,
TAMAKI WAS PERFECTLY PREPARED

TAMAKI, I MUST SPEAK WITH YOU SERIOUSLY. YOU HAVE BEEN A DUTIFUL PUPIL, DILIGENT IN YOUR LEARNING. YOUR STUBBORN-HEADED WAYS COME FROM YOUR MOTHER, AND SO, IN GENERAL, I EXCUSE THEM. BUT NOW, MY ADVANCED YEARS WEAR ON ME. SOON I KNOW MY TIME WILL COME, AND YOU WILL BE LEFT ALONE. SO YOU SHOULD THINK ON THESE THINGS AND COMPOSE YOURSELF.



MY GREATEST REGRET IS THAT NO ONE HAS BEEN HERE TO TRAIN YOU IN THE DUTIES OF A WOMAN. BUT AS YOU KNOW, MAN OR WOMAN, YOU ARE BOUND TO THE BUSHIDO OF THE SAMURAI. NEVER FORGET YOUR HONOR, BELOVED NEECE.



TO SURVIVE, YOU MUST DISGUISE YOURSELF AS A BOY UNTIL YOU FIND A PROPER PLACE TO BUILD A LIFE. AII, HOW I HATE TO LEAVE YOU—I WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOU OUT INTO THE WORLD MYSELF.

DEPARTED UNCLE, I THANK YOU FOR YOUR GUIDANCE. AND FOR THE POKE OF GOLD YOU HAVE LEFT ME AS SECURITY UNTIL I FIND WORK. MAY YOU BE REBORN AS SAMURAI IN THE FORTY DAYS.



THIS IS THE LAST RIDGE BEFORE THE OUTSIDE. AH, HONORED UNCLE, I DO NOT FEEL YOU ARE GONE. YOU SEEM A PART OF ME. YOUR WISDOM ECHOES IN MY HEART AND I MISS YOUR CHATTERING, NAGGING VOICE.



BELOVED TAMAKI!! I AM HERE! THE GODS ARE KIND: MY FEROCIOUS DUTY TO YOU HAS KEPT ME HERE A WHILE TO WATCH OVER YOU. YOU WILL SEE ME ONLY IN YOUR DREAMS, AND AS A VOICE IN YOUR THOUGHTS. WE WILL STILL BE TOGETHER.



THREE DAYS LATER



AT LAST! OTHER PEOPLE! HOW LARGE THEY ARE MORE HAIRY THAN MY UNCLE...SUCH VARIED SHAPES AND FACES



HELLO, TRAVELLERS!

HA! A BOY WITH A FAT TRAVEL-PACK!

HMMN... A FINE OLD SWORD, TOO.



BEWARE, MY NIECE! SEE HOW THEY STARE AT YOUR POSSESSIONS?! THEY ARE THIEVES— FLEE!



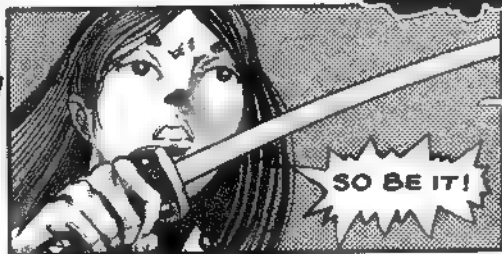
SURRENDER OR DIE, YOUNG WHELP!

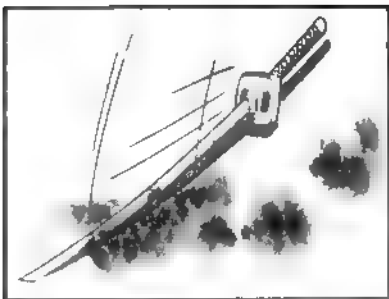


TRAVELERS, PLEASE! MY GOOD UNCLE TOLD ME THAT THERE WAS ALWAYS A REASONABLE WAY TO DISCUSS CONFLICTS. CAN WE NOT SETTLE THIS MISUNDERSTANDING PEACEABLY?



...OR MUST WE DO BATTLE?



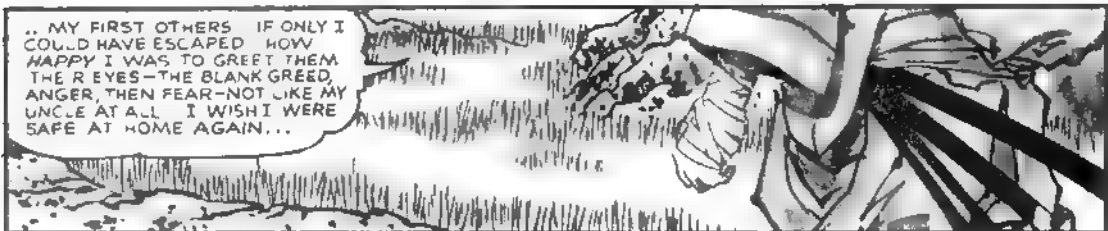


AHIEE. TRUE
BATTLE IS SO
DIFFERENT
FROM MY
BOUTS WITH
MY UNCLE.
SOUND OF
BLADE INTO
FLESH...
WHY COULD
THEY NOT
LISTEN?



CAN THIS BE
THE WAY IT IS
WITH PEOPLE? IS
MY UNCLE THE ONLY
GOOD ONE? FRIENDLY
...NO! HE TOLD ME
THERE WOULD BE
KIND PERSONS...

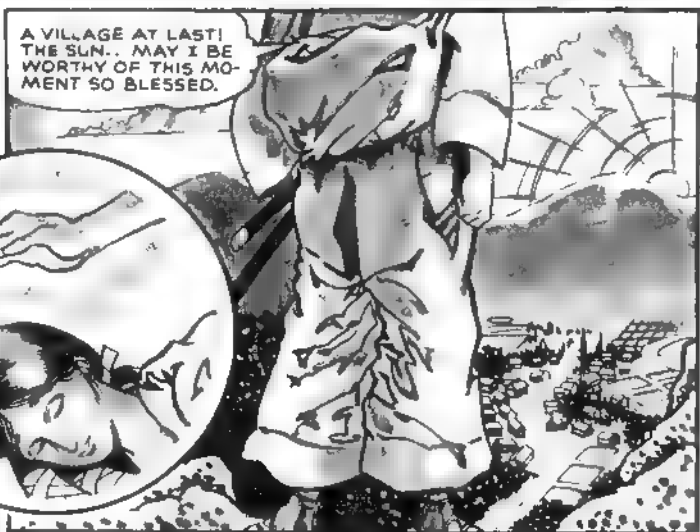
.. MY FIRST OTHERS IF ONLY I
COULD HAVE ESCAPED HOW
HAPPY I WAS TO GREET THEM
THE R EYES-THE BLANK GREED,
ANGER, THEN FEAR-NOT LIKE MY
UNCLE AT ALL I WISH I WERE
SAFE AT HOME AGAIN...



DO NOT WORRY, TAMAKI.
IT WAS THEIR KARMA TO
LEAVE THIS REALM AT
SUCH A TIME AND MAN-
NER. WHAT IS DONE IS
DONE. DO NOT CARRY
THE BURDEN OF THEIR
DEATHS.



A VILLAGE AT LAST!
THE SUN... MAY I BE
WORTHY OF THIS MO-
MENT SO BLESSED.



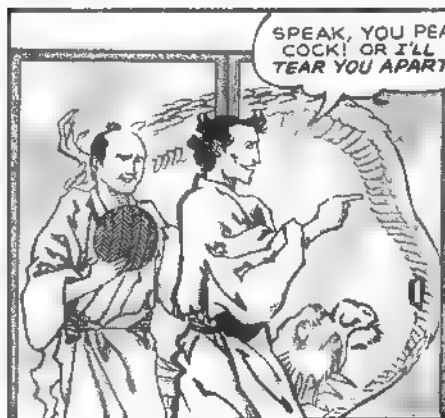
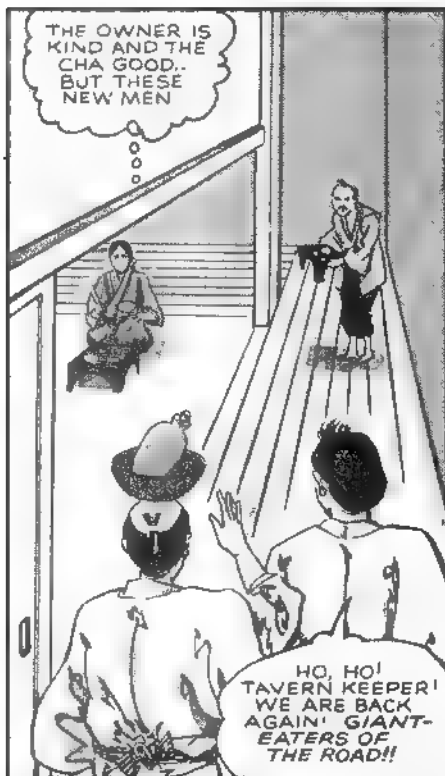
WE ALL PAY THE
PRICE OF SURVIVAL
AS THE GODS DECREE.
WIN OR LOSE ALL
THE SAME-YANG
OR YIN.



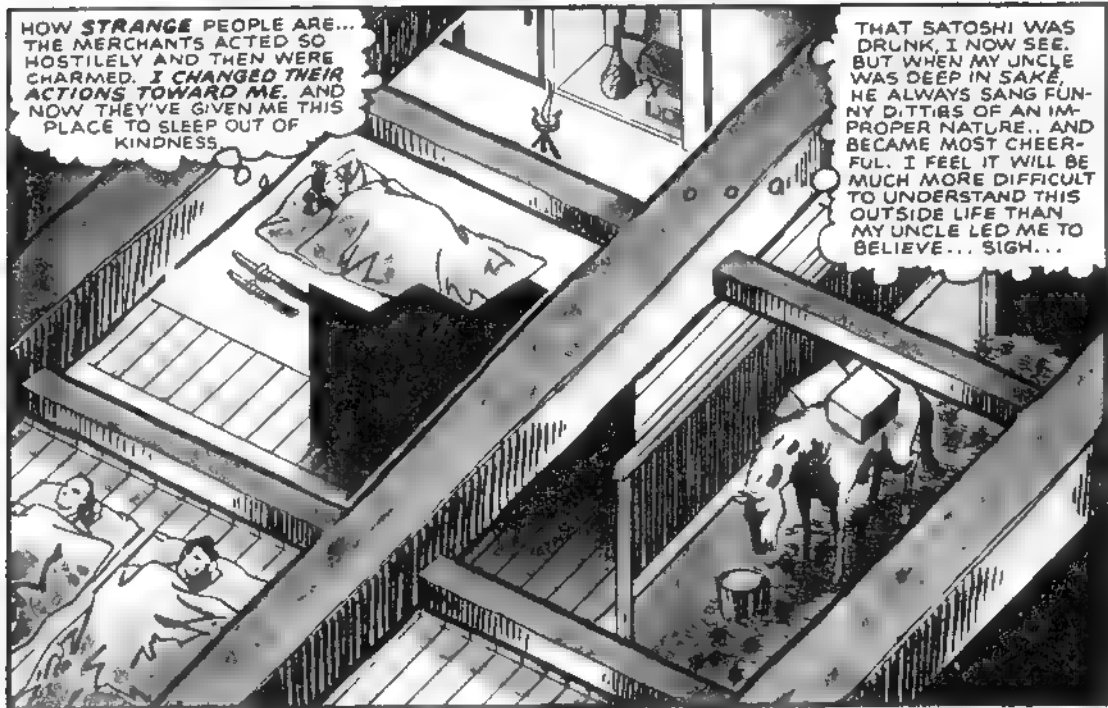
THIS IS THE
ONLY DWELLING
WITH LIGHTS
BURNING I
HEAR VOICES AND
LAUGHTER-AN INN.
TO SLEEP UNDER
A ROOF AGAIN
... AHH.

I CAN'T
STAND OUT HERE
ALL NIGHT-I AM
AFRAID... BUT I AM
HUNGRY MORE!











SO MANY OF THEM!
DO THINGS IN SUCH
A HURRY!

OHAYO, YOUNG
SAMURAI GOOD
MORNING.

MOVE ALONG,
YOU LAZY
DOG TURD



TAMAKI SPENT SEVERAL
DAYS IN THE VILLAGE,
SOAKING IN ITS DAILY
LIFE.



IN ORDER TO ASK
QUESTIONS FREELY,
SHE TOLD OF HER
SECLUSION. MOST
WERE HELPFUL
BUT SHE BEGAN TO
FEEL OVERWHELMED

AH, ANXIOUS NIECE,
YOU HAVE BEEN TOO
EAGER AND STUFFED
YOURSELF WITH THE
RICE OF VILLAGE LIFE.
YOU MERELY NEED TIME
AWAY TO MEDITATE ON
ALL THE
NEWNESS.

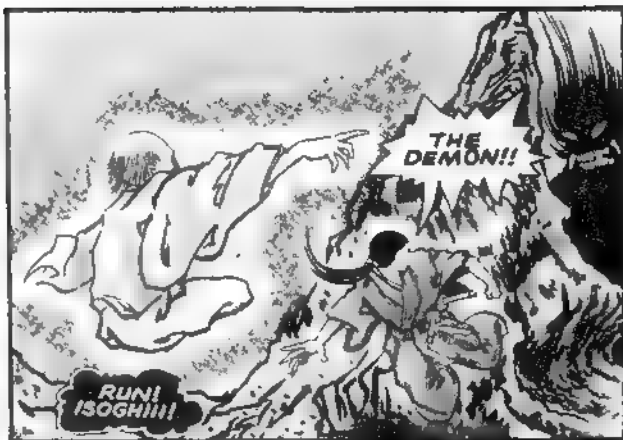


WHAT IS THE
PATH UP THE
MOUNTAIN,
LITTLE ONE?

BEHIND
THE TEA HOUSE,
TAMAKI-SAN, BUT
PLEASE DO NOT GO
THERE! IT IS KINJURU!
A DEMON WHO LIVES
THERE WHO EATS
ALL WHO COME
NEAR!



CHILDREN
CAN TELL SUCH
TALES. I'VE HEARD
THEM IN THE VILLAGE,
PLAYING SAMURAI
AND DAIMYOS, HA...

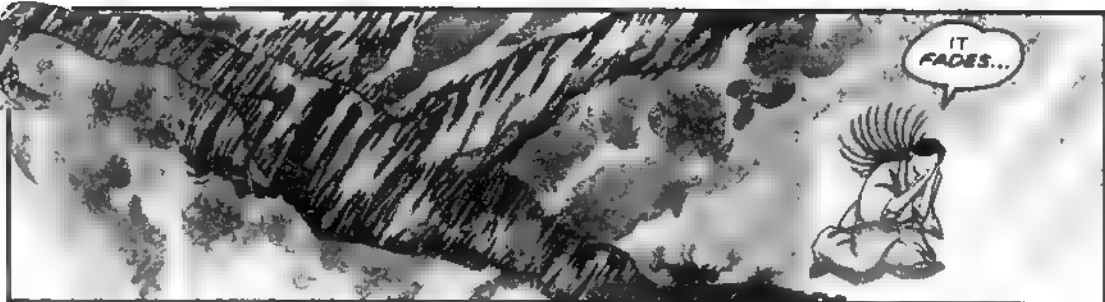


...AS THOUGH IT
GROWS FROM MY
FEAR! THE DEMON
FEEDS ON MY FRIGHT!

I SENSE IT TRULY. THE DEMON CAN
DEVOUR ME ONLY AS I GIVE OUT
FEARS. EVEN AS I HAVE CHANGED
MY CONCENTRATION, THE
DEMON HAS CEASED
TO GROW. I MUST
NOT BATTLE ITS
PRESENCE, BUT
ACCEPT!

I MUST..
COMPOSE
MYSELF...

I OPEN MYSELF TO IT...
THE DEMON PASSES THROUGH
ME. THE FEAR PASSES FROM
ME. I AM OPEN, I AM CALM...
AT ONE WITH THE STONES OF
THIS MOUNTAIN, TO MY FATE
.. SO AT PEACE ..THE EARTH,
GRASSES AND STONES ARE
ME, ALL ONE, FLOWING TO-
GETHER...CALM, CALM,
PEACE.



IT
FADES...

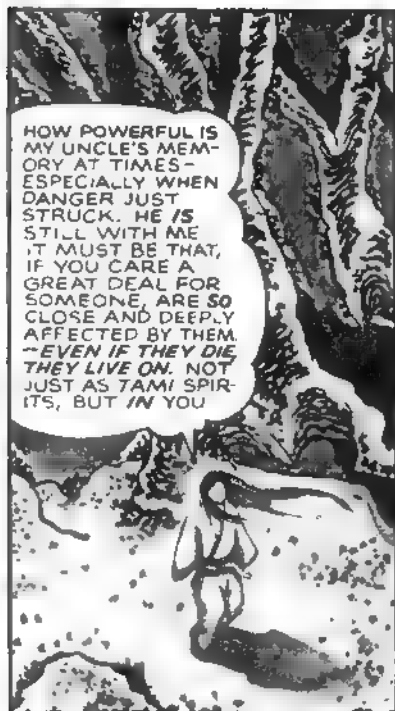


TAMAKI-SAMA!
YOU HAVE SAVED
YOURSELF!



IT SEEMS THERE IS MUCH MORE TO THIS
WORLD THAN I KNOW. I CANNOT BE THE
INFAILLIBLE PROTECTOR I HAD HOPED!

...I'M SO
TIRED.



HOW POWERFUL IS
MY UNCLE'S MEMO-
RY AT TIMES -
ESPECIALLY WHEN
DANGER JUST
STRUCK. HE IS
STILL WITH ME.
IT MUST BE THAT,
IF YOU CARE A
GREAT DEAL FOR
SOMEONE, ARE SO
CLOSE AND DEEPLY
AFFECTED BY THEM.
EVEN IF THEY DIE
THEY LIVE ON. NOT
JUST AS TAMI SPIR-
ITS, BUT IN YOU

I HAVE MET SUCH VARIED
CONFLICTS SO FAR - THE
FIGHT, THE DRUNKEN MER-
CHANTS AND THE DEMON!
LIFE OUTSIDE IS COMPLEX
AND CONFUSING. WITH
EACH ENCOUNTER I MUST
BE PREPARED TO RESPOND
ESPECIALLY TO THAT EVENT.



WHAT AN
ADVENTURE! TO DIS-
COVER ALL THE WAYS
TO BE WITH OTHERS -
AND TO SURVIVE THE
KNOWING.

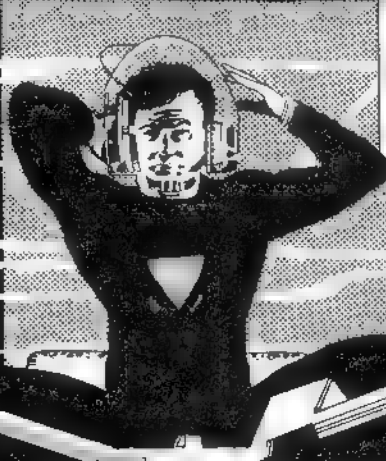


AH, TAMAKI. I
KNOW YOU CAN
TAKE GOOD CARE
OF YOURSELF NOW.
BUT I REFUSE TO
LEAVE JUST WHEN
YOU ARE BECOMING
MOST INTERESTING!
NO! I WILL REMAIN
TO WATCH OVER YOU
AS YOU JOURNEY
INTO... LIFE.


END

COSMIX

OSMIX



THE BLACKNESS IN HIS SOUL
SEETHED AS HE DONNED THE
HELMET. THE PROBES CLICKED
NEATLY IN PLACE AND HUMMED
EXPECTANTLY IT WOULD BE THE
LAST TIME, SUICIDE WHEN IT
WAS DONE...



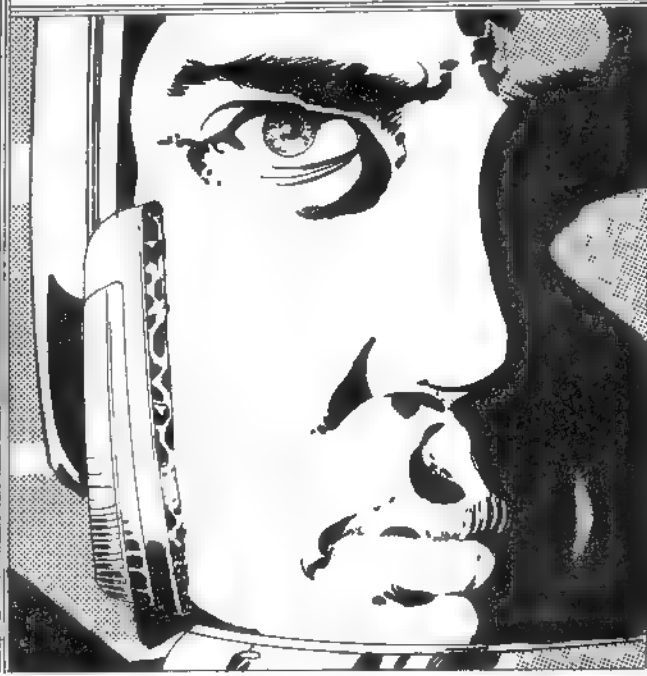
BUT, FOR NOW, THERE
WAS ONE MORE **COSMIX**
TO PRODUCE...

THE BOARD SWIRLED
WITH LIGHT FROM HIS
DEEPEST THOUGHT
PROCESSES. HE ALLOWED
HIS MIND TO DIRECT THE
LIGHT, SHAPING IT INTO
FIGURES AND MOTION...



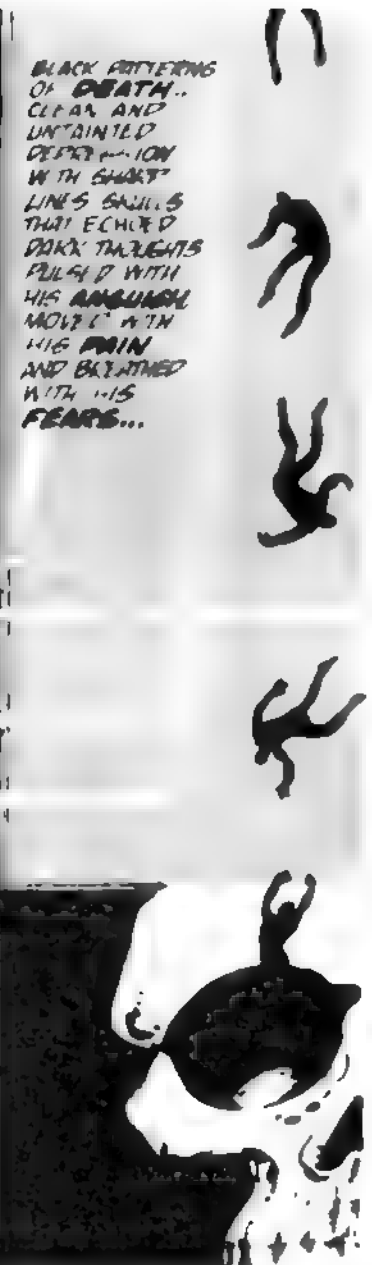
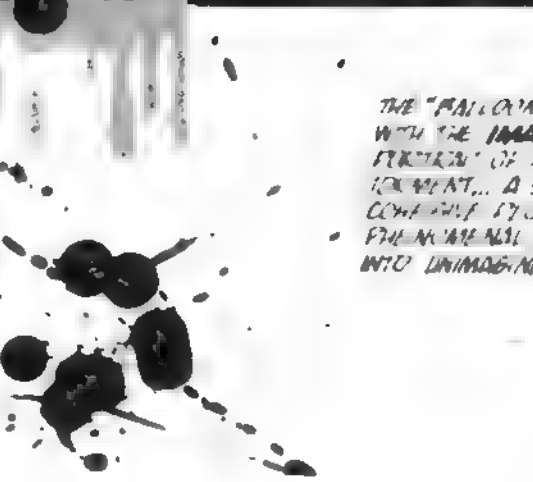
TELEVISION WAS GONE AS WERE
MOVIES THERE WERE NO NEW
BOOKS, NO MUSIC, JUST THE COSMIX.

HE WAS NOT VERY GOOD AND
HE KNEW IT, BUT THIS ONE LAST
TIME HE WOULD SHOW THEM ALL.
THE REVIEWERS WOULD BE
TREATED TO A RARE VIEW OF
THE DEPTHS OF DESPAIR..



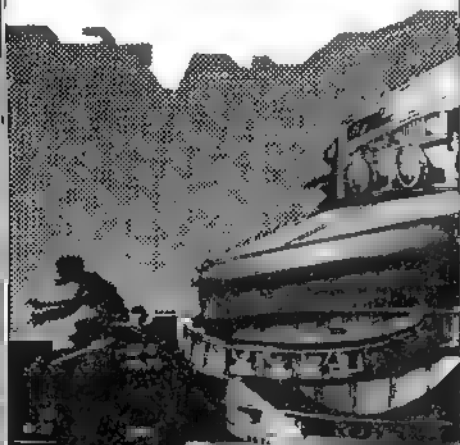
HIS APPENDING
SUICIDE
OVERKILLED
ALL THE
INTEREST ALL
EXTRAORDINARY
THINGS!

BLACK BITTERING
OF DEATH...
CLEAR AND
UNTAINED
DEFECTION
WITH SHORT
LINES SAILING
THAT ECHOED
DARK THOUGHTS
PULSED WITH
HIS ANGUISH
MOVING WITH
HIS PAIN
AND BREATHED
WITH HIS
FEARS...



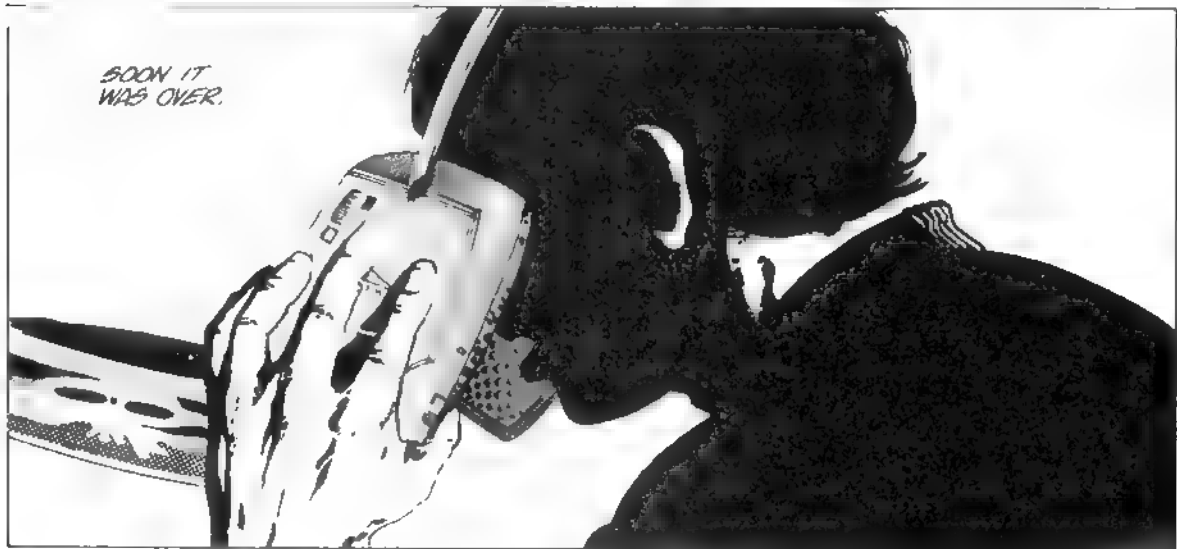
THE "FALLING" BECAME ONE
WITH THE IMAGES AN INTIMATE
EXPRESSION OF AN ACT IN
MOVEMENT... A STORY WITHOUT
CONCRETE STORY BECAME A
FUNDAMENTAL SERIES OF GRIMACES
INTO UNIMAGINED DESPAIR...

NO DRUGS WERE NEEDED HE
HADN'T POPPED **STEPP** TO
BRING OUT HIS SUBCONSCIOUS
HADN'T INJECTED **MEZ** TO
GAIN ACCESS TO THE SANCTUM
OF HIS EGO...



HIS CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS WERE ONE AND AT THAT MOMENT WERE BEING PROJECTED
INTO TWENTY FIVE POINT SEVEN MILLION **COSMIXSCANS** PATCHED THROUGH ON "OVERRIDE"
BY THE SCAN COMPUTER, HIS SOUL WAS ON DISPLAY FOR ALL **COSMIXWORK** SUBSCRIBERS...

SOON IT
WAS OVER.

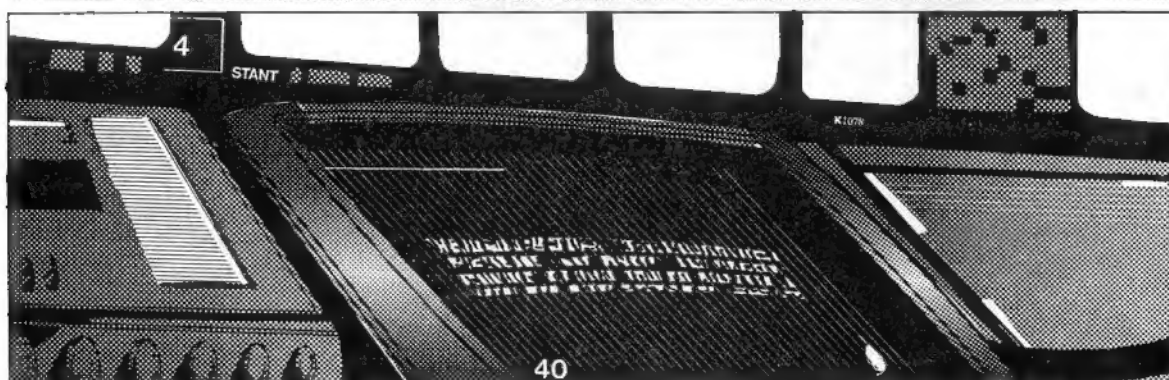
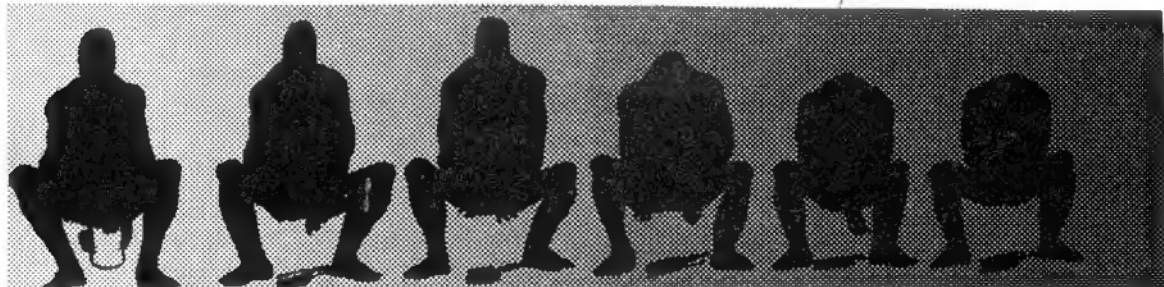


YES. OVER.
BUT AT LEAST
THEY HAD
SEEN. AT
LEAST NOW
THEY WOULD
KNOW THE
MYTH OF
THE **COSMIX**
HAD BEEN
LAD TO
REST...

THE GLAMOUR WAS A FALLACY,
THE EXCITEMENT WAS A
FACADE. THE **COSMIX** ARTISTS,
REVERED BY THE MASSES,
LIVED IN IVORY TOWERS
WITH SHACKLES ON THE
WALL. THEIR LIVES WERE
AN ENDLESS PROCESS OF
PREPARATION FOR THE
NEXT **COSMIXWORK...**

THE REVIEWERS WOULD BE STUNNED NOW,
AWARE AT LAST OF THE **IRREVOCABLE**
PAIN THEY ENGENDERED. BY THE TIME
THEY ARRIVED TO ARREST HIM, HE
WOULD BE DEAD. BUT, AT LONG LAST,
THE PEOPLE WILL HAVE **SEEN.**

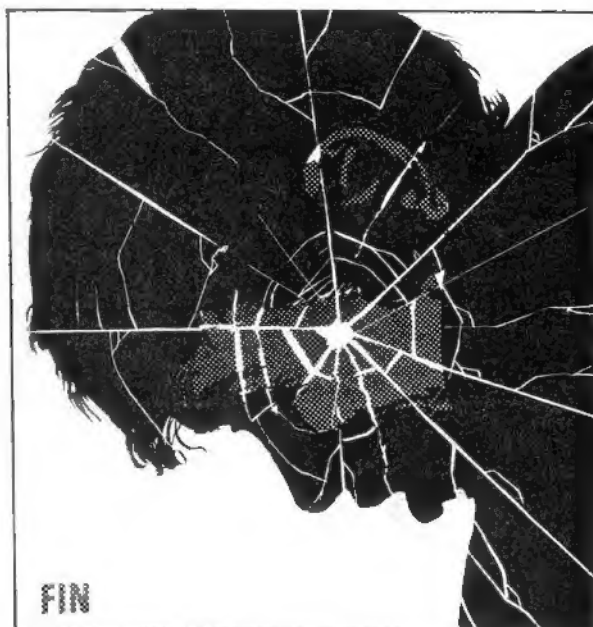
AND, HAVING SEEN, THEY WOULD NOT
SOON FORGET.



AFTER A MOMENT, THE REVIEWS BEGAN HUMMING ONTO HIS MONITOR. "SUPERB" "A NEW HIGH FOR
A YOUNG MEDIUM" FOR A FULL AND UNPRECEDENTED HOUR THEY PASSED IN REVIEW. "RARE
DEPTH AND CLARITY" "A LANDMARK"

THE FULL IRONY OF
HIS PROFESSION STRUCK
HOME AND TORE AT
HIS INSIDES. HAD HE
BEEN AN ORDINARY
MAN, HE MIGHT HAVE
WEPT. BUT HE WAS A
COSMIX ARTIST AND SO HE
STORED THE PAIN HE FELT
FOR FUTURE USE -- AND
THEREIN LAY THE CRUX
OF THE MATTER...

...WHAT?--
WHAT - WOULD - HE - DO - FOR -
ENCORE?



Parsifal

by
PERCIE RUSSELL
PATRICK C. MASON



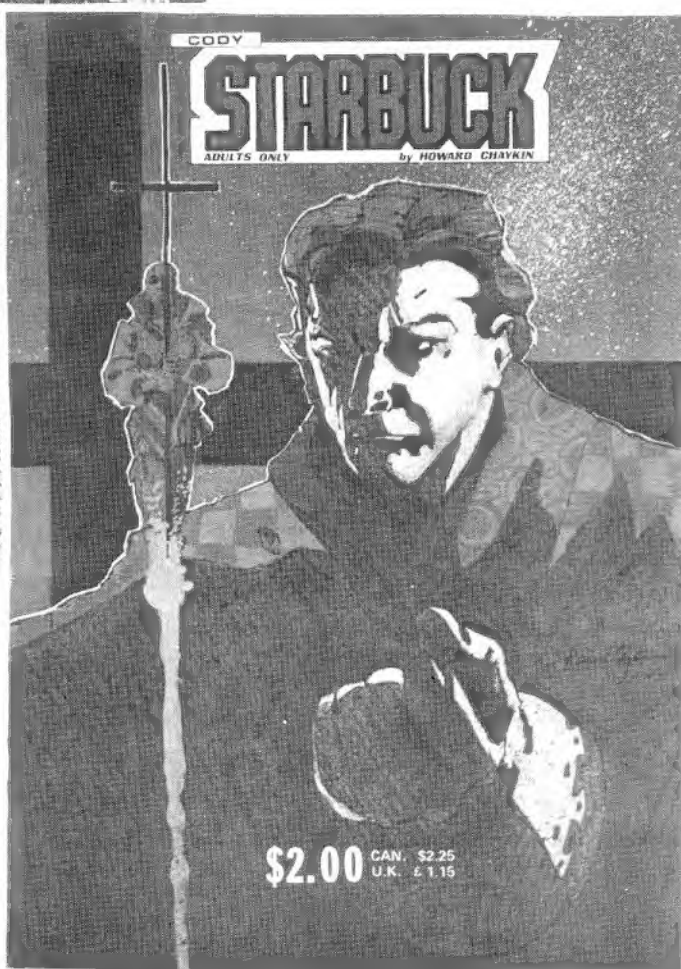
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Says "First Printing November 1978" on page 2.